

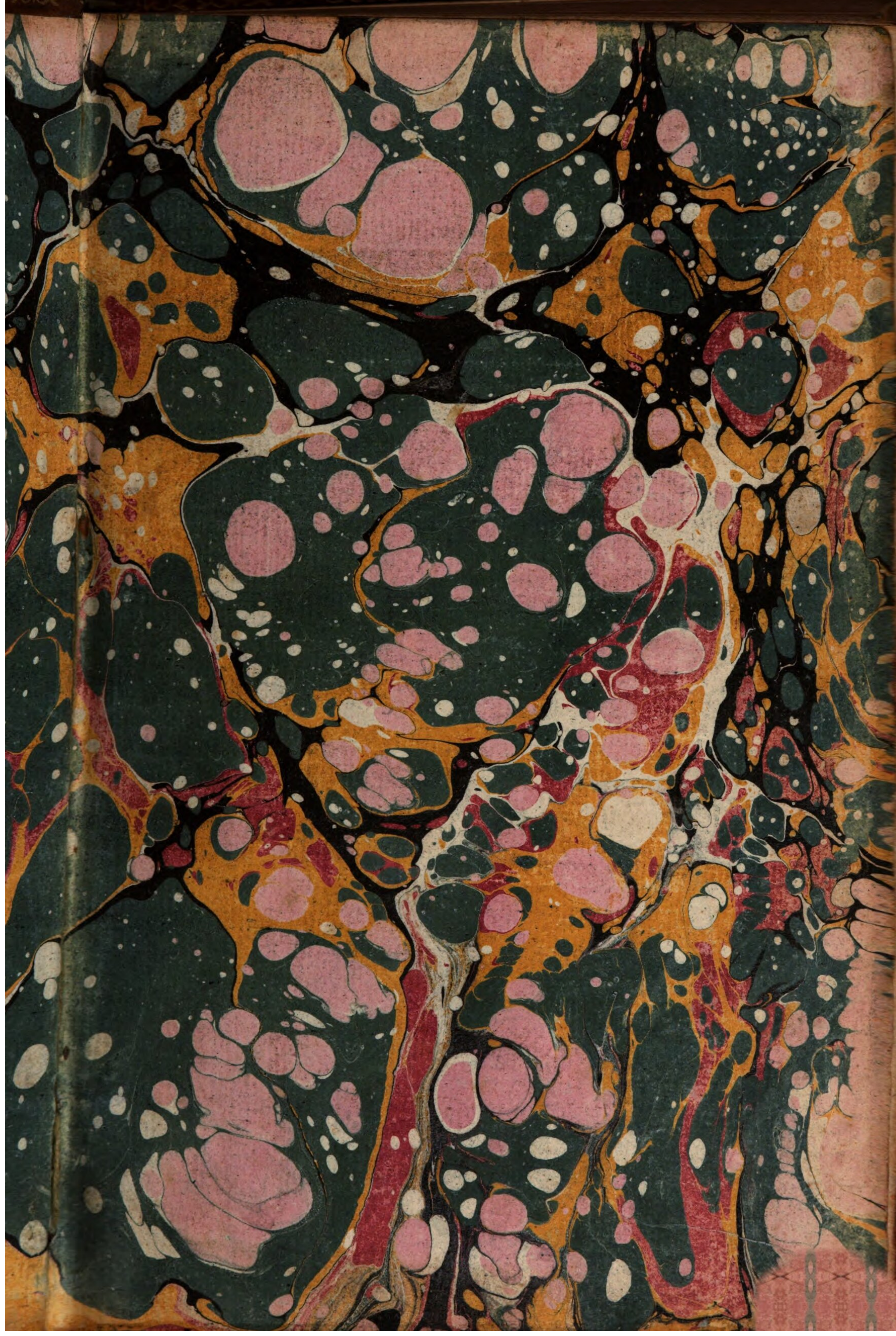




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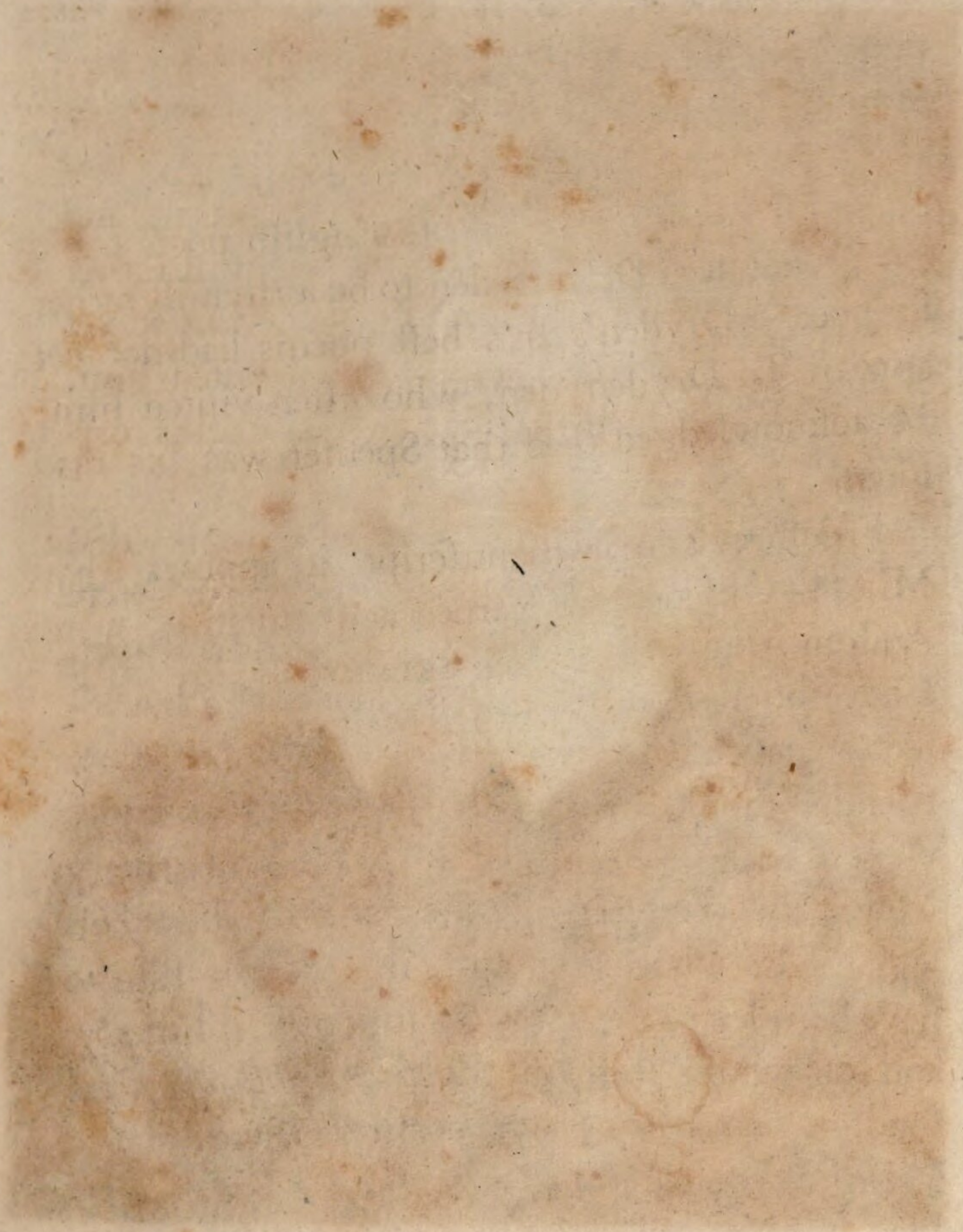
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*J. Baker sculp.*

JOHN MILTON.

Born 1608. Died 1674.

*From the original Painting by Faithorne.  
in the possession of William Baker Esq.<sup>r</sup>*

*Published June 1. 1801 by F & C. Rivington St Paul's Church Yard.*



THE  
POETICAL WORKS  
OF  
JOHN MILTON.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

WITH THE  
PRINCIPAL NOTES  
OF  
VARIOUS COMMENTATORS.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

ILLUSTRATIONS,

WITH

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE OF MILTON.

BY THE REV. HENRY JOHN TODD, M.A.

“ Si quid meremur fana posteritas sciet.”

*Od. Ad J. Rous. v. 86.*

— “ While I sit with thee, I seem in Heaven;  
“ And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear  
“ Than fruits of palm-tree, pleasantest to thirst  
“ And hunger both, from labour, at the hour  
“ Of sweet repast; they satiate, and soon fill,  
“ Though pleasant; but thy words, with grace divine  
“ Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety.”

*Par. Lost, B. viii. 210.*

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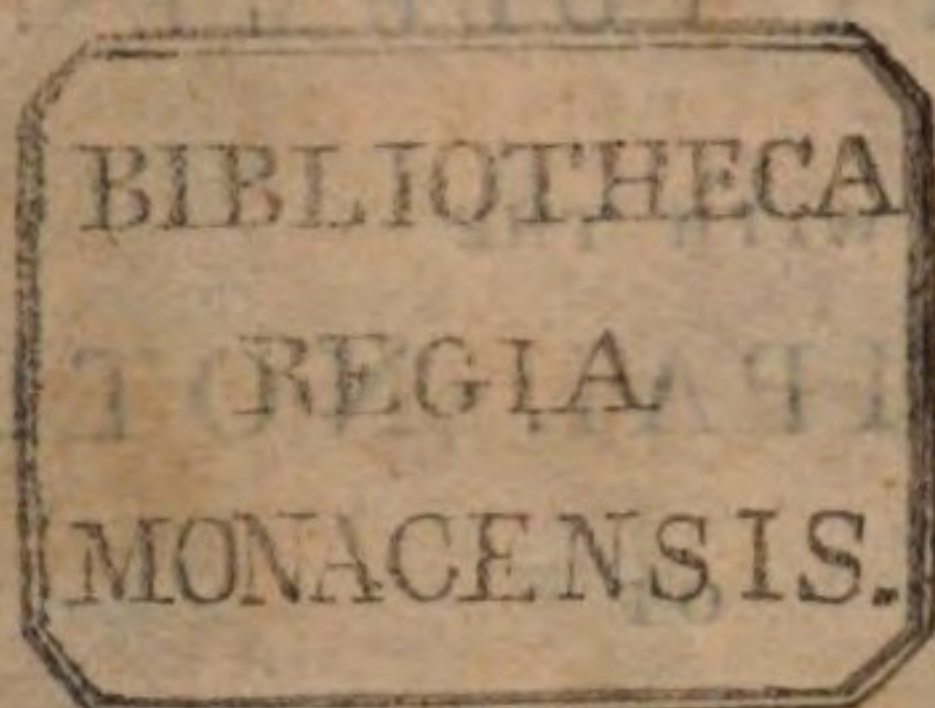
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M. DCCC. I.



THE  
POLITICAL WORKS  
OF  
JOHN MILTON



WITH

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE OF MILTON  
BY JOHN TODD, M.A.



LONDON:

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TO HIS GRACE,  
FRANCIS, DUKE OF BRIDGEWATER,  
MARQUIS OF BRACKLEY, &c. &c.

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HENRY JOHN TODD.



## P R E F A C E.

---

THE Publick is here presented with a complete edition of the Poetical Works of Milton, accompanied with notes of various authors. To this undertaking the editor was invited, and encouraged, at the close of the year 1798. Without this previous declaration, he might be accused of intrusion into his present office. Sensible that the task would have been better executed by many recent annotators on Milton, he would not indeed have listened to the unexpected application of engaging in so important an employment, if some literary friends had not promised their assistance. He therefore undertook to arrange his materials; and continued his inquiries till the close of the year 1799, when the edition began to be printed. From that time, his attention to the progress and completion of the work has been constant and unwearied.

Since the first publication of the Poetical Works entire, with illustrations, nearly half a century has elapsed. Of those criticks and annotators, whose observations were then selected by Dr. Newton; as well as of those, with whose subsequent remarks the following pages are enriched; some account may be thought necessary. The first annotator on the poet was Patrick Hume, a Scotchman. He published, in 1695, a copious commentary on the *Paradise Lost*; “<sup>a</sup> to which some of his successors in

<sup>a</sup> Preface to his edition of the Smaller Poems.



## PREFACE.

the same province," says Mr. Warton, " apprehending no danger of detection from a work rarely inspected, and too pedantick and cumbersome to attract many readers, have been often amply indebted, without even the most distant hint of acknowledgement." His illustrations in these volumes will be rarely found uninteresting. To him succeeded the elegant Addison, by whose " <sup>b</sup> blandishments of gentleness and facility, Milton has been made an universal favourite, with whom readers of every class think it necessary to be acquainted." His essays on the *Paradise Lost* are printed in this edition, as a Preliminary Dissertation; the remarks on each *particular book* not being detached from the *general* observations on the Poem, because Mr. Addison himself was desirous that the reader should not neglect to view the " <sup>c</sup> whole extent of his criticism. By the same critick " <sup>d</sup> *Comus* and " <sup>e</sup> *L'Allegro* had been before commended. In 1732, Dr. Bentley published a splendid edition of the *Paradise Lost*, by which he acquired no honour. His specious pretences of an interpolated text, and his arbitrary method of emendation, were received with derision and disgust. Yet there are some notes, in the edition, which bespeak the unvitiated taste of this eminent scholar, and to which the classical reader

<sup>b</sup> Dr. Johnson's Life of Addison.

<sup>c</sup> See the Prolegomena in this vol. p. 42. Dr. Johnson also wrote his Essay on Milton's Versification, in order to serve as a continuation of this criticism. See the Proleg. in this vol. pp. 194, 197.

<sup>d</sup> Tatler, No. 98, Nov. 24, 1709.

<sup>e</sup> Spectator, No. 249, Dec. 15, 1711.



## PREFACE.

will always thankfully subscribe. Immediately after the publication of this edition, the admirers of Milton were gratified by Dr. Pearce's masterly and candid refutation of the editor's chimerical corrections: And the *Review of the Text of Paradise Lost* furnished abundant annotations, at once instructive and delightful. In 1734, the two Richardsons published their *Explanatory Notes on the Paradise Lost*. Soon afterwards, Dr. Warburton communicated to the world some remarks upon the same poem. An *Essay upon Milton's imitations of the Ancients*, said to be written by a gentleman of North Britain, whose name, it is believed, has not been divulged; the *Letters concerning poetical translations*, ascribed to Auditor Benson; and the *Critical Observations on Shakspeare*, in which are interspersed remarks upon Milton, by Mr. Upton; were the next publications, from which Dr. Newton professes to have derived assistance. But, besides the flower of those which had been already published, he added many new observations both of others and his own. He was indebted, for several ingenious illustrations of *Paradise Lost* to his relation, Dr. Greenwood. He was also obliged by the use of Dr. Heylyn's manuscript remarks on the same poem; which had been before communicated to Bentley, and of which the greater part had been disingenuously adopted, by that critick, without acknowledgement. By the manuscript communications of Richardson, Jortin, and Warburton; and more particularly by those of the modest and liberal Mr. Thyer; his commentary on *Paradise Lost* was



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considerably enlarged. To the same learned coadjutors, with the addition of such respectable names as Sympfon, and Seward, the editors of Beaumont and Fletcher; of the Rev. Mr. Meadowcourt, Prebendary of Worcester; of the Rev. Mr. Calton, of Lincolnshire; and of Mr. Peck, the antiquary; Dr. Newton's subsequent edition of *Paradise Regained*, *Samson Agonistes*, and the *Smaller Poems*, was also gratefully indebted.

In the year after the publication of Dr. Newton's edition of *Paradise Lost*, there was published at Glasgow the first Book of that poem with a large and very learned commentary; from which some notes are selected in this edition. They, who are acquainted with this commentary, will concur with the present editor in wishing that the annotator had continued his ingenious and elaborate criticisms on the whole poem.

In a letter from the late Mr. Mason to Doddsley, the bookseller, dated May 31, 1747, now in the possession of a friend, an editorial intention is announced which, though not accomplished, it may not be improper here to notice; as it coincides with the opinion of him, who has so ably illustrated the picturesque description, and romantick imagery, of the poems which Mr. Mason mentions; and to whose illustrations the editor must next express his obligations. "I could wish to know," says Mr. Mason, "whether Tonson or any other Bookseller has a property in the second volume of Milton. I have often thought it a great pity that many of the beautiful pieces it contains should be so little read



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as they certainly are. I fancy this has arisen from *the bad thing* they are tack'd to. I want vastly to have a separate edition of the *Tragedy, Mask, Lycidas, L'Allegro, &c.* And I fancy I shall some time or other undertake it myself; but, if you think that it would sell at present, I would willingly give you my assistance either for a preface, or notes, or any thing that should be thought necessary; and this merely for the sake of the incomparable poet, whom I am not content with having considered and praised as the Author of *Paradise Lost* alone."

What Mr. Maſon might have intended, the late Mr. Warton effected. In 1785 the Publick was preſented with *Lycidas, L'Allegro, Il Penſeroſo, Arcades, Comus, Odes, Sonnets, &c.* accompanied with Mr. Warton's critical and explanatory notes; of which a ſecond edition, with many alterations and large additions, was publiſhed in 1791 ſoon after his lamented death: In whom Poetry and Antiquity loſt one of their moſt zealous votaries, Criticiſm one of its ableſt aſſertors, Society one of its moſt agreeable members, and the Univerſity of Oxford one of her moſt valuable and moſt reſpected ſons. Mr. Warton appears to have alſo planned an edition of *Paradiſe Regained* and *Samſon Agoniſtes*, by having omitted in the latter edition ſuch notes as more immediately related to thoſe poems, and which had appeared in the former edition; and by ſubſtituting merely references to the notes on thoſe reſpective paſſages. The ſignatures to the ſheets of his latter edition are numbered indeed *volume the firſt*. From both theſe editions, in which the



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names of Warburton, of Hurd, Bowle, and Dr. Joseph Warton, often occur as annotators, the most valuable illustrations have been derived to the following pages. From Mr. Dunster's edition of *Paradise Regained*, published in 1795, a copious stock of judicious and elegant observations on that poem has been also here extracted. From modern works of critical eminence, relating to the English language and poetry, many notices have been likewise drawn; in particular, from the compositions of Lord Monboddo, Dr. Beattie, and Dr. Blair; from the late commentaries on Shakspeare; from Mr. Headley's Select Specimens of Ancient English Poetry; from the acute observations of Dr. Johnson and Mr. Hayley; and in short, if the present editor may respectfully adopt the language of his predecessor, "like the bee, he has been studious of gathering sweets wherever he could find them." These contributions, however, have not been exacted, without references to the original treasuries of the information adduced, or without the names of the authors subjoined. Of the notes in Dr. Newton's excellent edition of the *Paradise Lost*, few have been omitted, and some have been shortened; by which method the editor has been enabled to introduce, without too copious a commentary, the important observations of criticks already enumerated, as well as of those who are yet to be named. Of the notes also in his edition of *Paradise Regained*, and the remaining *Poems*, several are retained. The labours of Mr. Warton and Mr. Dunster have rendered more perhaps unnecessary. For the notes,



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to which no signature is affixed, the present editor is accountable.

Such are the printed volumes to which the editor acknowledges, with gratitude, his obligations. He must now acknowledge obligations, not perhaps less interesting or valuable, to manuscript communications. To the late George Steevens, Esq. he has been indebted for the interleaved copies of *Paradise Lost*, and of the *Smaller Poems* printed in 1673, with many manuscript remarks by the late Mr. Bowle; after whose decease these volumes came into Mr. Steevens's hands; and, since the death of Mr. Steevens, have become the property of the present editor. This singular kindness was conferred by Mr. Steevens at the commencement of this undertaking; not without a promise also of further assistance; which, unfortunately for the publick and for the editor, he lived not to afford.

To Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq. the author of the very elegant Historical Memoir on Italian Tragedy, and of other valuable publications, the editor is likewise particularly obliged for many remarks, biographical as well as critical.

His sincerest thanks are also due to the Rev. Dr. Dampier, Dean of Rochester; who, on being made acquainted by the editor's very kind and zealous friend, the present Dean of Gloucester, with this undertaking, obligingly transmitted to him an interleaved copy of *Paradise Lost*, with numerous manuscript notes, by that accomplished scholar, the late Benjamin Stillingfleet, Esq. They contain not only the chief classical allusions, which are



## PREFACE.

found in Dr. Newton's edition ; but references to, or citations of, various other passages subservient to the illustration of the poem. They had been put together about the year 1745, with a view to publication ; but were left unfinished, from the apprehension that they would not make their way in opposition to Dr. Newton's edition, which was then announced under the patronage of Lord Bath. These particulars are gathered from several important letters of Mr. Stillingfleet to Dr. Dampier's father, formerly Dean of Durham ; to whom he had presented his interleaved *Paradise Lost*. From one of these letters, entrusted to him also by the Dean of Rochester, the editor has selected the truly Miltonick Sonnet written by Mr. Stillingfleet, which he has printed in the *Preliminary Observations on the Sonnets*, in the fifth volume of this edition. It must be added, that the volume, containing the first six books of *Paradise Lost*, was nearly printed off, when the editor was honoured with these remarks. A selection, therefore, of Mr. Stillingfleet's notes on those books, will be found, duly acknowledged, at the close of this edition, among other additions to the preceding volumes.

To the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury he begs to mention his respectful obligations also for the use of manuscripts in their possession, which have contributed to the purposes of this edition.

But, above all, his gratitude can never be sufficiently expressed for the aids afforded him by the Library of his Grace, the Duke of Bridgewater ; as on a former occasion, for permission to print the



## PREFACE.

manuscript Mask of Comus, obtained through the obliging application of the Rev. Francis Henry Egerton ; so on the present, for permission to print the manuscript Mask of Marston, performed before the Countess Dowager of Derby, and to make use of many rare and curious books, perhaps not to be found in other collections. To the great kindness of Mr. Egerton, and to the condescension of the Duke of Bridgewater, the editor owes the opportunity of introducing to publick notice the poems of some forgotten and unknown English bards ; as well as other pieces of our ancient literature, hitherto overpassed by the most curious investigators. The invaluable collection, which his Grace possesses, has been removed from the family seat at Ashridge to Bridgewater House, Cleveland Court. To the present age the notification of such treasures will be highly acceptable ; for, among its characteristics, a taste for relishing the strains of elder days is honourably conspicuous ; to the encrease of which, the recent publication of *Specimens of Early English Poetry* will, doubtless, powerfully contribute.

The editor has been fortunate also in obtaining other manuscript supplies of no mean import. To his friends, the liberal friends indeed to the literature of their country, Isaac Reed, Esq., and James Bindley, Esq., he is obliged not only for many valuable suggestions, but also for the favour of several scarce works in their choice and rich collections. The few communications of other gentlemen he has noticed in their respective places. Having thus discharged his duty of grateful ac-



## PREFACE.

knowledge, he proceeds to give the reader an account of what he is to expect further in the conduct of the present edition.

The chief purpose of the new notes, is, in humble imitation of Mr. Warton, “to explain the allusions of Milton; to illustrate or to vindicate his beauties; to point out his imitations both of others, and of himself; to elucidate his obsolete diction; and, by the adduction and juxtaposition of parallels universally gleaned both from his poetry and <sup>f</sup> prose, to ascertain his favourite words, and to show the peculiarities of his phraseology.” Mr. Warton justly adds, that, “among the English poets, those readers who trust to preceding commentators will be led to believe, that Milton imitated Spenser and Shakspeare only. But his style, expression, and more extensive combinations of diction, together with many of his thoughts, are also to be traced in other English poets, who were either contemporaries or predecessors, and of whom many are now not commonly known. Nor have his imitations from Spenser and Shakspeare been hitherto sufficiently noted.” Of this it has been a part of the present editor’s task, as it was of Mr. Warton, to produce proofs. The coincidences of “Fancy’s sweetest children,” Spenser, Shakspeare, and Milton, are accordingly here enlarged. The obligations of our author to Dante, hitherto little noticed, as well as

<sup>f</sup> Milton’s Prose-works afford many materials indeed for comparative criticism. See the opinions of Mr. Warton, and of the present editor, on these compositions, in the sixth vol. of this edit. pp. 392, 396.



## PREFACE.

to some other Italian poets, are pointed out. The poet's imitations of himself are also considerably augmented. Nor have the romances and fabulous narratives, on which the poetry of Milton is often founded, been neglected. The editor, while he has not been sparing of classical illustration, has constantly kept in mind the necessity of attention to the literature of Milton's age. Without this attention, as Mr. Warton remarks, "the force of many strikingly poetical passages has been weakened or unperceived, because their origin was unknown, unexplored, or misunderstood. Coeval books, which might clear such references, were therefore to be consulted; and a new line of commentary was to be pursued. Comparatively, the classical annotator has here but little to do. Dr. Newton, an excellent scholar, was unacquainted with the treasures of the Gothick library. From his more solid and rational studies, he never deviated into this idle track of reading." But, as Milton, at least in his early poems, may be reckoned an old English poet; and as in his later poetry allusions to the sources of fiction, with which he had been pleased in his youth, often appear; he generally requires that illustration, however trifling it may seem to fastidious readers, without which no old English poet can well be illustrated.

The arrangement of the materials in these volumes has been formed with a view to uniformity, and to the accommodation of the reader. The Table of General Contents will point out the order observed; the dissertations prefixed; the appendixes subjoined.



## PREFACE.

To the whole is added a Glossarial Index. The editor thinks it proper to observe, that, in compliance with the wishes of several literary friends, the *Paradise Lost* has been placed first, in the following methodical disposition of the poetical works.

He has endeavoured to render the text as perspicuous as possible; not only by several illustrations of antiquated words, which, as Mr. Warton has observed, in a succession of editions had been gradually and silently, yet perhaps not always properly, refined; but also by comparing the copies published under the immediate inspection of Milton, as well as most subsequent editions; more particularly those of Tickell, Fenton, Bentley, and the later editors; as the notes will show. Nor should it here be omitted, that Milton has not so uniformly contracted the words of his language, as to countenance the spelling of *isle*, of *honour*, of *inferiour*, of *musick*, and several other words, with the omission of a letter in each. Milton's manuscript at Cambridge, and his own editions of his *Poems*, as well as of his *Paradise Lost*, will afford testimonies to this observation. The text of Milton must, indeed, exhibit some peculiarities. By such as are here retained, the meaning cannot be embarrassed. His love of Italian, of Chaucer, and of Spenser, requires this notice. The emendations of *swelling*, in *Paradise Lost*, B. vii. 319, of *are*, B. x. 816, and of the 496th verse in *Samson Agonistes*, are additions to the few alterations of the text admitted by preceding editors. To the punctuation also, of which Milton has been pronounced by Mr. Warton



## PREFACE.

to have been habitually careless, great attention has been paid. The editor conceived it his duty likewise to examine the manuscript, containing many of Milton's early poems, preserved in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge; and he found, on examination, several particularities which had been omitted by those who had before collated the manuscript, and which were too curious not to be noticed in the present edition. To the end of the several poems, of which there are copies in the manuscript, these Various Readings are annexed. The reason is assigned.

The editor offers, with the utmost deference, some account of the Life of Milton; of which the materials have been drawn from authentick sources. In this biographical attempt some new anecdotes, relating to the history of Milton's friends, of his works, and of his times, will also be found. These may perhaps plead as an apology for the rashness of the editor, in affecting to sketch the poet, whom the masterly hands of a Johnson and an Hayley have depicted; a rashness, to which he has been impelled by the persuasion of others, that, to a new edition of his Works, it is a custom to prefix the Life of the Author.

Such are the materials here accumulated, in order to explain the labours of Milton: of Milton, the proud boast of his own country, and the admiration of the world: of Milton, whose imitations of others are so generally adorned with new

§ See the Appendix to *Par. Lost*, vol. iii. p. 490.



## PREFACE.

modes of sentiment or phraseology, that they lose the nature of borrowings, and display the skill and originality of a perfect master; and from whom succeeding poets, at various periods, have “stolen authentick fire.”

From the liberal and candid reader, the editor hopes to meet with more than pardon; having spared neither pains nor cost in the prosecution of his design, and having strenuously exerted his humble abilities to please and to inform. His distance from the metropolis has sometimes indeed deprived him of the benefit of consulting, on particular exigencies, not only the publick libraries, but many kind and judicious friends with whose notice he has been honoured. The great attention and correctness of the press of Messrs. Bye and Law, have, however, rendered the volumes free from unpardonable inaccuracies; from such errors, it is believed, as might destroy the sense of the author, and excite indignation against the editor.

CANTERBURY, July 20. 1801.



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SOME ACCOUNT OF THE  
LIFE OF MILTON.



JOHN MILTON, son of John and Sarah Milton, was born on the 9th of December <sup>a</sup> 1608, at the house of his father, who was then an eminent scrivener in London, and lived at the sign of the Spread Eagle (which was the armorial ensign of the family) in Bread-street. The ancestry of the poet was highly respectable. His father was educated as a gentleman, and became a <sup>b</sup> member of Christ Church, Oxford; in which society, as it may be presumed, he imbibed his attachment to the doctrines of the Reformation, and abjured the errors of Popery; in consequence of which, his father, who was a bigotted papist, disinherited him. The student therefore chose, for his support, the profession already mentioned; in the practice of which he became so successful as to be enabled to give his children the advantages of polished education, and at

<sup>a</sup> “The xx<sup>th</sup> daye of December 1608 was baptized John, the sonne of John Mylton, scrivener.” *Extract from the Register of All-hallows, Bread-Street.*

<sup>b</sup> See the Note on *Ad Patrem*, vol. vi. p. 333.



length to retire with comfort into the country. The grandfather of the poet was under-ranger or keeper of the forest of Shotover, near Halton in Oxfordshire; and probably resided at the village of Milton in that neighbourhood, <sup>c</sup> where the family of Milton, in remoter times, were distinguished for their opulence; till, one of them having taken the unfortunate side in the civil wars of York and Lancaster, the estate was sequestered; and the proprietor was left with nothing but what he <sup>d</sup> held by his wife. There is a tradition <sup>e</sup> that the poet had once resided in this village, while he was Secretary to Cromwell.

The mother of Milton is said by <sup>f</sup> Wood, from Aubrey, to have been a Bradshaw; descended from a family of that name in Lancashire. Peck relates, that he was <sup>g</sup> informed “ she was a

<sup>c</sup> In the Registers of Milton, as I have been obligingly informed by letter from the Rev. Mr. Jones, there are however no entries of the name of Milton.

Philips, Milton's nephew, says that the family resided at Milton near Abingdon in Oxfordshire, as appeared by the monuments then to be seen in Milton church. But *that Milton is in Berkshire*; and Dr. Newton searched in vain for the monuments said to exist in that church.

The information of Wood is most probably correct, that they lived at Milton near Halton and Thame.

<sup>d</sup> Philips's Life of Milton, 1694. p. iv.

<sup>e</sup> Communicated to me by letter from Milton.

<sup>f</sup> Fasti Ox. vol. i. p. 262, &c. chiefly taken, as Mr. Warton has observed, from Aubrey's manuscript Life of Milton, preserved in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

<sup>g</sup> Memoirs of Milton, 1740. p. 1.



Haughton of Haughton-tower" in the same county. But Philips, her grandson, whose authority it is most reasonable to admit, <sup>h</sup> affirms, in his Life of Milton, that she was a Caston, of a genteel family derived originally from Wales. Milton himself has <sup>i</sup> recorded, with becoming reference to the respectability of his descent, the great esteem in which she was held for her virtues, more particularly for her charity.

His father was particularly distinguished for his musical abilities. He is said to have been "a <sup>k</sup> voluminous composer, and equal in science, if not in genius, to the best musicians of his age." Sir John Hawkins and Dr. Burney, in their Histories of Musick, have each selected a specimen of his skill. He has been mentioned also by <sup>l</sup> Mr. Warton, as the author of "A sixe-fold Politician. Together with a sixe-fold precept of Policy. Lond. 1609." But Mr. Hayley agrees with Dr. Farmer and Mr. Reed in assigning that work rather to John Melton, author of the *Astrologaster*, than to the father of our poet. Of his attachment to literature, however, the Latin verses of his son, addressed to him with

<sup>h</sup> Life of Milton, p. v.

<sup>i</sup> " Londini sum natus, genere honesto, patre viro integerrimo, matre probatissimâ, et eleemosynis per viciniam potissimum notâ." *Defens. sec.* vol. iii. p. 95. edit. fol. 1698.

<sup>k</sup> Dr. Burney's Hist. of Musick, vol. iii. p. 134.

<sup>l</sup> See the Note on ver. 66. *Ad Patrem*, vol. vi. p. 337.



no less elegance than gratitude, are an unequivocal proof.

The care, with which Milton was educated, shows the discernment of his father. The bloom of genius was fondly noticed, and wisely encouraged. He was so happy, says Dr. Newton, as to share the advantages both of private and publick education. He was at first instructed, by private tuition, under <sup>m</sup> Thomas Young, whom Aubrey calls "a puritan in Essex who cutt his haire short;" who, having quitted his country on account of his religious opinions, became Chaplain to the English merchants at Ham-  
burgh; but afterwards returned, and during the usurpation of Cromwell was master of Jesus College, Cambridge. Of the pupil's affection for his early tutor, his fourth elegy, and two Latin epistles, are publick testimonies. Mr. Hayley considers the portrait of Milton by Cornelius Jansen, drawn when he was only ten years

<sup>m</sup> See the Notes at the beginning of the fourth *Elegy*, vol. vi. p. 199. If Milton imbibed from this instructor, as Mr. Warton supposes, the principles of puritanism, it may be curious to remark that he never adopted from him the outward symbol of the sect. Milton preserved his "clustering locks" throughout the reign of the *round-heads*. Wood, describing the *Seekers* who came to preach at Oxford in 1647, affords a proper commentary on Young's *cutting his hair short*. "The generality of them had mortified countenances, pining voices, and eyes commonly, when in discourse, lifted up, with hands lying on their breasts. They mostly had *short hair*, which at this time was commonly called the *Committee cut*, &c." *Fasti Ox.* vol. ii. p. 61.



old, *at which age* Aubrey affirms “*he was a poet,*” as having been executed in order to operate as a powerful incentive to the future exertion of the infant author. This supposition is very probable: And, as the portrait was drawn by a painter <sup>n</sup> then rising into fame, and whose price for a head was five broad pieces, the mark of encouragement was rendered more handsome and more conspicuous.

From the tuition of Mr. Young, Milton was removed to St. Paul’s School, under the care of <sup>o</sup> Alexander Gill, who at that time was the master; to whose son, who was then usher and afterwards master, and with whom Milton was a favourite scholar, are addressed, in friendship, three of the poet’s Latin epistles. There is <sup>p</sup> no register of admissions into St. Paul’s School so far back as the beginning of the seventeenth century. But, as Milton’s domestick preceptor quitted England in 1623, it is probable that he was then admitted into that seminary; at which time he was in his fifteenth year. He had already studied with uncommon avidity; but at the same time with such inattention to his health,

<sup>n</sup> Janfen’s first works in England are said to be dated about 1618; the year, in which the young poet’s portrait was drawn. See Walpole’s *Anecdotes of Painting, Works*, vol. iii. p. 149. edit. 1798.

<sup>o</sup> See the first Note on the first *Elegy*, vol. vi. p. 174.

<sup>p</sup> As I found, upon inquiry of the Rev. Dr. Roberts, the present Head-Master.



feldom retiring from his books before midnight, that the source of his blindness may be traced to his early passion for letters. In his twelfth year, as <sup>q</sup> he tells us, this literary devotion began; from which he was not to be deterred either by the natural debility of his eyes, or by his frequent head-aches. The union of genius and application in the same person was never more conspicuous.

In 1623 he produced his first poetical attempts, the *Translations of the 114th and 136th Psalms*, to which, as to some other juvenile productions, he has annexed the date of his age. It has been uncandidly supposed, that he intended, by this method, to obtrude the earliness of his own proficiency on the notice of posterity. Dr. Johnson calls it “a *boast*, of which Politian

<sup>q</sup> “Pater me puerulum humaniorum literarum studiis destinavit; quas ita avidè arripui, ut *ab anno ætatis duodecimo* vix unquam ante mediam noctam à lucubrationibus cubitum discederem; quæ prima oculorum pernicies fuit, quorum ad naturalem debilitatem accefferant et crebi capitis dolores; quæ omnia cùm discendi impetum non retardarent, et in ludo literario, et sub aliis domi magistris erudiendum quotidie curavit.” *Def. sec.* ut supr.

Aubrey also relates, that “when Milton went to schoole, and when he was very younge, he studied very hard, and fate up very late, commonly till twelve or one o clock; and his father ordered the maid to sett up for him.” MS. *Assmol. Mus.* ut supr. His early reading was in poetical books. See the Notes on the *Translations of the 114th and 136th Psalms* in the sixth volume of this edition. Humphry Lownes, a printer, living in the same street with his father, supplied him at least with Spenser and Sylvester’s *Du Bartas*.



has given him an example." But both Milton and Politian have followed classical authority. Lucan<sup>r</sup> thus speaks of himself:

" Est mihi, crede, meis animus constantior annis,  
 " Quamvis nunc juvenile decus mihi pingere malas  
 " Cœperit, et nondum vicesima venerit æstas."

However, in these Translations may surely be discerned the dawning of real genius. And in his poem, *On the death of a fair Infant*, written soon after, how finely has that genius grown even with his little growth! For, as a poetical composition, it displays the vigour and judgement of maturer life; while, by its sensibility, it powerfully affects the feeling mind. The verses also, *At a Vacation Exercise in the College*, written at the age of nineteen, have been repeatedly and justly noticed as containing indications of the future bard, " whose genius was equal to a subject that carried him beyond the limits of the world."

Few readers will be inclined to admit that Cowley and other poets have surpassed, in " products of vernal fertility," the efforts of Milton. Few will regard, without aversion, the unfair, I had almost said (considering the age in which Milton lived) the ridiculous,<sup>s</sup> comparison of

<sup>r</sup> Lucanus de seipso, in Panegyrico ad Calpurnium Pisonem. *Epigr. & Poem. Vet.* Paris, 1590. p. 121.

<sup>s</sup> In the Biograph. Brit. vol. iv. p. 591. edit. Kippis.



Milton's juvenile effusions with those of Chatterton. Milton, as he is the most learned of modern poets, may perhaps retain his princely rank also in the list of those who have written valuable pieces at as early or an earlier age; and Politian, Tasso, Cowley, Metastasio, Voltaire, and Pope, may bow to him, "as to superiour Spirits is due."

In the 17th year of his age, distinguished as a classical scholar, and conversant in several languages, he was sent, from St. Paul's School, to Cambridge; and was <sup>t</sup> admitted a Pensioner at Christ's College on the 12th of February, 1624-5, under the tuition of Mr. William Chappel, afterwards Bishop of Cork and Ross in Ireland. Here he attracted particular notice by his academical exercises, as well as by several copies of verses, both Latin and English, upon occasional subjects. He neglected indeed no part of literature, although his chief object seems to have been the cultivation of his poetical abilities.

"This good hap I had from a careful education," he says; "to be inured and seasoned betimes with the best and elegantest authors of the learned tongues; and thereto brought an ear that

<sup>t</sup> "Johannes Milton, Londinensis, filius Johannis, institutus fuit in Literarum elementis sub Mag<sup>ro</sup>. Gill, Gymnasii Paulini Præfecto, admissus est Pensionarius Minor Feb. 12<sup>o</sup>. 1624, sub M<sup>ro</sup>. Chappell, solvitque pro Ingr. o. 10. 8." *Extract from the College Register.*



could measure a just cadence, and scan without articulating; rather nice and humorous in what was tolerable, than patient to read every drawling versifier."

To his eminent skill, at this time, in the Latin tongue Dr. Johnson affords his tribute of commendation. "Many of his elegies appear to have been written in his eighteenth year; by which it appears that he had then read the Roman authors with nice discernment. I once heard Mr. Hampton, the translator of Polybius, remark, what I think is true, that Milton was the first Englishman who, after the revival of letters, wrote Latin verses with classic elegance." Milton's Latin exercises, which he recited publicly, are also marked with characteristick animation. From some remarkable passages in these, as Mr. Hayley observes, it appears "that he was first an object of partial severity, and afterwards of general admiration, in his college. He had differed in opinion concerning a plan of academical studies with some persons of authority in his College, and thus excited their displeasure. He speaks of them as highly incensed against him; but expresses, with the most liberal sensibility, his surprise, delight, and gratitude, in finding that his enemies forgot their animosity to honour him with unexpected applause."

But incidents unfavourable to the character of Milton, while a student at Cambridge, have been



positively asserted to be contained in his own words; and the poet has been summoned to prove his own flagellation and banishment in the following verses, in his first elegy:

“ Jam nec arundiferum mihi cura revifere Camum,

“ Nec dudum *vetiti* me *laris* angit amor.—

“ Nec duri libet ufque *minas perferre* Magiftri,

“ *Cæteraque ingenio non fubeunda meo.*”

“ Si fit hoc *exilium* patrias adiiffe penates,

“ Et vacuum curis otia grata fequi,

“ Non ego vel *profugi* nomen fortémve recuso,

“ Lætus et *exilii* conditione fruor.”

On these lines Mr. Warton observes, that “ the words *vetiti laris*, and afterwards *exilium*, will not suffer us to determine otherwise, than that Milton was sentenced to undergo a temporary removal or rustication from Cambridge. I will not suppose for any immoral irregularity. Dr. Bainbridge, the Master, is reported to have been a very active disciplinarian: and this lover of liberty, we may presume, was as little disposed to submission and conformity in a college as in a state. When reprimanded and admonished, the pride of his temper, impatient of any sort of reproof, naturally broke forth into expressions of contumely and contempt against his governour. Hence he was punished.

“ He is also said to have been whipped at Cambridge. See *Life of Bathurst*, p. 153. This has been reprobated and discredited, as a most



extraordinary and improbable piece of severity. But in those days of simplicity and subordination, of roughness and rigour, this sort of punishment was much more common, and consequently by no means so disgraceful and unseemly for a young man at the university, as it would be thought at present. We learn from Wood, that Henry Stubbe, a Student of Christ-Church Oxford, afterwards a partisan of sir Henry Vane, ‘ shewing himself too forward, pragmatical, and conceited,’ was publickly whipped by the Censor in the college-hall. *Ath. Oxon.* vol. ii. p. 560. See also *Life of Bathurst*, p. 202. I learn from some manuscript papers of Aubrey the antiquary, who was a student of Trinity college Oxford, four years from 1642, ‘ that at Oxford and, I believe, at Cambridge, the rod was frequently used by the tutors and deans: and Dr. Potter, while a tutor of Trinity college, I knew right well, whipt his pupil with his sword by his side, when he came to take his leave of him to go to the inns of court.’ In the Statutes of the said college, given in 1556, the Scholars of the foundation are ordered to be whipped by the Deans, or Censors, even to their twentieth year. In the University Statutes at Oxford, compiled in 1635, ten years after Milton’s admission at Cambridge, corporal punishment is to be inflicted on boys under sixteen. We are to recollect, that Milton, when



he went to Cambridge, was only a boy of fifteen. The author of an old pamphlet, *Regicides no Saints nor Martyrs*, says that Hugh Peters, while at Trinity college Cambridge, was publickly and officially whipped in the *Regent-walk* for his insolence, p. 81. 8vo.

“ The anecdote of Milton’s whipping at Cambridge, is told by Aubrey. MS. *Mus. Ashm. Oxon.* Num. x. P. iii. From which, by the way, Wood’s Life of Milton in the *Fasti Oxonienses*, the first and the ground-work of all the lives of Milton, was compiled. Wood says, that he draws his account of Milton ‘ from his own mouth to my Friend, who was well acquainted with and had from him, and from his relations after his death, most of this account of his life and writings following.’ *Atb. Oxon.* vol. i. *Fasti*, p. 262. This *Friend* is Aubrey; whom Wood, in another place, calls credulous, ‘ roving and magotie-headed, and sometimes little better than crazed.’ *Life of A. Wood*, p. 577. edit. Hearne, *Th. Caii Vind.* &c. vol. ii. This was after a quarrel. I know not that Aubrey is ever fantastical, except on the subjects of chemistry and ghosts. Nor do I remember that his veracity was ever impeached. I believe he had much less credulity than Wood. Aubrey’s *Monumenta Britannica* is a very solid and rational work, and its judicious conjectures and observations have been



approved and adopted by the best modern antiquaries. Aubrey's manuscript Life contains some anecdotes of Milton yet unpublished.

“ But let us examine if the context will admit some other interpretation. *Cæteraque*, the most indefinite and comprehensive of descriptions, may be thought to mean literary tasks called impositions, or frequent compulsive attendances on tedious and unimproving exercises in a college-hall. But *cætera* follows *minas*, and *perferre* seems to imply somewhat more than these inconveniences, something that was *suffered*, and severely felt. It has been suggested, that his father's economy prevented his constant residence at Cambridge; and that this made the collegial *dudum vetitus*, and his absence from the university an *exilium*. But it was no unpleasing or involuntary banishment. He hated the place. He was not only offended at the college-discipline, but had even conceived a dislike to the face of the country, the fields about Cambridge. He peevishly complains, that the fields have no soft shades to attract the Muse; and there is something pointed in his exclamation, that Cambridge was a place quite incompatible with the votaries of Phœbus. Here a father's prohibition had nothing to do. He resolves, however, to forget all these disagreeable circumstances, and to return in due time. The dismissal, if any, was not to



be perpetual. In these lines, *ingenium* is to be rendered temper, nature, disposition, rather than genius.

“ Aubrey says, from the information of our author’s brother Christopher, that Milton’s “ first tutor there [at Christ’s college] was Mr. Chappell, from whom receiving some unkindness, (*he whipt him*) he was afterwards, though it seemed against the rules of the college, transferred to the tuition of one Mr. Tovell, who dyed parson of Lutterworth.’ MS. *Mus. Ashm.* ut supr. This information, which stands detached from the body of Aubrey’s narrative, seems to have been communicated to Aubrey, after Wood had seen his papers; it therefore does not appear in Wood, who never would otherwise have suppressed an anecdote which contributed in the least degree to expose the character of Milton. I must here observe, that Mr. Chappell, from his original Letters, many of which I have seen, written while he was a fellow and tutor of Christ’s College, and while Milton was there, and which are now in the possession of Mr. Moreton of Westerhoe in Kent, by whom they have been politely communicated, appears to have been a man of uncommon mildness and liberality of manners.”

To the authority of the preceding remarks Dr. Johnson has implicitly subscribed; not with-



out adding, however, that it may be conjectured, from the willingness with which the poet has perpetuated the memory of his exile, that its cause was such as gave him no shame.

That flagellation might be performed upon offenders at Cambridge, (as well as at Oxford,) the Statutes of that University will show : That Milton suffered this publick indignity, rests solely upon the testimony of Aubrey, which I am unable to controvert : But it is remarkable that it never should have been noticed by those who would have rejoiced in such an opportunity of exposing Milton to a little ridicule. The application also of *cætera* may be perhaps more *general* than Mr. Warton and Dr. Johnson have been pleased to consider it ; instead of corporal punishment, it may suggest the idea of academical restrictions, to which a youth of Milton's genius could not submit ; or merely of threats perhaps, which he thought he did not deserve ; and, if he therefore acquiesced in a short exile from Cambridge, as some biographers suppose, it should seem that, by his admission to the degree of Batchelor of Arts in 1628, he had incurred no loss of terms ; which, rustication however must have occasioned ; and which the Register of his College, or of the University, would probably have noticed. His reply to an enemy, who in the violence of controversy had asserted that he was ex-



pelled, may here be cited. <sup>u</sup> “ I must be thought, if this libeller (for now he shews himself to be so) can find belief, after an inordinate and riotous youth *spent at the University*, to have been at length *vomited out thence*. For which *commodious lye*, that he may be encouraged in the trade another time, I thank him; for it hath given me an apt occasion to acknowledge publicly, with all gratefull mind, that *more than ordinary favour and respect which I found above any of my equals* at the hands of those courteous and learned men, the fellows of the College wherein I spent some years; who at my parting, after I had taken two degrees, as the manner is, signified many ways, how much better it would content them that I would stay; as by many letters, full of kindness and loving respect, both before that time, and long after, I was assured of their singular good affection towards me.” And still more pointedly in another place: \* “ Pater me——*Cantabrigiam* misit: *Illic* disciplinis atque artibus tradi solitis septennium studui; *procul omni flagitio*, bonis omnibus probatus, usquedum magistri, quem vocant, gradum, &c.”

To oblige one of the fellows, his friends so affectionately noticed, he wrote, in 1628, the

<sup>u</sup> Apology for Smectymnuus. Prose-Works, vol. i. p. 174. edit. 1698.

\* Defens. sec. Prose-Works, vol. iii. p. 95. edit. 1698.



comitial verses, entitled *Naturam non pati senium*. I mention this in order to obviate a remark, made by Dr. Johnson, that the poet countenanced an opinion, prevalent in his time, “that the world was in its decay, and that we have had the misfortune to be produced in the decrepitude of nature.” In the preceding year the following very learned work had been published, “An Apologie or Declaration of the Power and Providence of God in the Government of the World, by George Hakewill, D.D. and Archdeacon of Surrey, 1627.” The young poet, I conceive, had been much pleased with this excellent work, which refutes, with particular felicity of argument, the absurdity of supposing nature impaired. This forgotten folio has found an able advocate in modern days. “They,” says Dr. Warton, “whom envy, malevolence, discontent, or disappointment, have induced to think that the world is totally degenerated, and that it is daily growing worse and worse, would do well to read a sensible, but too much neglected, treatise of an old Divine, written in 1630, [this is the *second* edition,] Hakewill’s Apology &c.” This work was commended by Archbishop<sup>z</sup> Usher. And a truly

<sup>y</sup> Pope’s Works, edit. 1797. vol. iv. p. 319.

<sup>z</sup> See a Letter from Dr. Hakewill to Archbishop Usher, in the Life and Letters of Usher by R. Parr, D.D. fol. 1686. *Letters*, p. 398.



amiable and learned author, to whom the literature of this country is peculiarly indebted, has closed his *Philological Inquiries* with a chapter, well calculated, like the animated lines of Milton, to banish the timid and unbenevolent idea of nature's decrepitude.

Milton was designed by his parents, and once in his own resolutions, for the Church. But his subsequent unwillingness to engage in the office of a minister was communicated to a friend, in a letter; (of which two draughts exist in a manuscript;) with which he sent his impressive Sonnet, *On his being arrived at the age of twenty three*. The truth is, says Dr. Newton, he had conceived early prejudices against the doctrine and discipline of the Church. This, no doubt, was a disappointment to his friends, who though in comfortable were yet by no means in great circumstances. Nor does he seem to have been disposed to any profession; it is certain that he also declined the <sup>b</sup> Law. Dr. Newton thinks

<sup>a</sup> See Birch's Life of Milton. Dr. Newton's edit. of Milton, Sonnet vii. General Dictionary, 1738, vol. vii. And Biograph. Brit. 1760, vol. v. Art. *Milton*, where they are printed.

<sup>b</sup> His contempt of the Law, as well as of the Church, is pretty strongly marked. See the Note *Ad Patrem*, ver. 71. vol. vi. p. 338. To the ecclesiastical lawyers he has shown no mercy; but alludes to "chancellours and suffragans, delegates and officials, with all the *bell-pestering* rabble of sumners and apparitors," in the very spirit of Quevedo. See his *Animadversions*, &c. Prose Works, vol. i. p. 159. edit. 1698.



that he had too free a spirit to be limited and confined; that he was for comprehending all sciences, but professing none. His conduct, however, on these occasions is a proof of the sincerity with which he had resolved to deliver his sentiments. “For me, I have determined to lay up as the best treasure and solace of a good old age, if God vouchsafe it me, the honest liberty of free speech from my youth.”

Having taken the degree of <sup>d</sup> M.A. in 1632, he left the university, and retired to his father's house in the country; who had now quitted business, and lived at an estate which he had purchased at Horton near Colnebrooke, in Buckinghamshire. Here he resided five years; in which time he not only, as he himself informs us, read over the Greek and Latin authors, particularly the historians, but is also believed to have written his *Arcades*, *Comus*, *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, and *Lycidas*. The pleasant retreat in the country excited his most poetick feelings; and he proved himself able, in his pictures of rural life, to rival the works of Nature which he contemplated with delight. In the neighbourhood of Horton the Countess Dowager of Derby resided; and the *Arcades* was

<sup>c</sup> Prose-Works, vol. i. p. 220. edit. 1698.

<sup>d</sup> He was admitted to the same degree at Oxford in 1635. See Wood, Fasti, vol. i. p. 262.



performed by her grand-children at this seat, called Harefield-place. It seems to me, that Milton intended a compliment to his fair neighbour, (for <sup>e</sup> fair she was,) in his *L'Allegro*:

“ Towers and battlements it fees

“ Bosom'd high in tufted trees,

“ Where perhaps some Beauty lies,

“ The Cynosure of neighbouring eyes.”

The woody scenery of <sup>f</sup> Harefield, and the personal accomplishments of the Countess, are not unfavourable to this supposition; which, if admitted, tends to confirm the opinion, that *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* were composed at Horton.

The Mask of *Comus*, and *Lycidas*, were certainly produced under the roof of his father. It may be observed that, after his retirement to private study, he paid great attention, like his master Spenser, to the Italian school of poetry. Dr. Johnson observes, that “ his acquaintance with the Italian writers may be discovered by the mixture of longer and shorter verses in *Lycidas*, according to the rules of Tuscan poetry.” In *Comus* the sweet rhythm and cadence of the Italian language is no less observable. Of these poems, as of his other works, the reader will

<sup>e</sup> See the preliminary Notes to *Arcades*, in the fifth volume of this edition, pp. 147, 148. and *Arcades*, ver. 14, &c.

<sup>f</sup> See Lysons's *Middlesex*, 1800. *Harefield*, p. 108.



find critical opinions in their respective places. I must here observe that the house, in which Milton drew such enchanting scenes, was about <sup>8</sup> ten years since pulled down; and that, during his residence at Horton, he had occasionally taken lodgings in London, in order to cultivate musick and mathematicks, to meet his friends from Cambridge, and to indulge his passion for books.

On the death of his mother in 1637, he prevailed with his father to permit him to visit the continent. This permission Mr. Hayley supposes to have been “the more readily granted, as one of his motives for visiting Italy was to form a collection of Italian musick.” His nephew Philips indeed relates, that, while at Venice, he shipped a parcel of curious and rare books which he had collected in his travels; particularly a chest or two of choice musick-books of the best masters flourishing about that time in Italy. Having obtained some directions for his travels from Sir Henry Wotton, to whom he had communicated his <sup>h</sup> earnest desire of seeing

<sup>8</sup> As I have been obligingly informed by letter from the present Rector of Horton.

<sup>h</sup> See Sir Henry Wotton’s Letter to him, and the Notes, in the fifth volume of this edition, p. 177, &c. A romantick circumstance of Milton’s juvenility has been publickly mentioned, which has been supposed to have formed the first impulse of his Italian journey. In the General Evening Posts in the Spring of



foreign countries, he went in 1638, attended with a single servant, to Paris; where, by the favour of Lord Scudamore, he was introduced

1789 it is supposed to have appeared; in which, however, I have not been so fortunate as to discover it. Possibly in some other public Paper it may be found. The reader will be highly gratified in finding the anecdote clothed in the following elegant dress:

“ In sultry noon when youthful MILTON lay,  
 “ Supinely stretch’d beneath the poplar shade,  
 “ Lur’d by his Form, a fair Italian Maid  
 “ Steals from her loitering chariot, to survey  
 “ The slumbering charms, that all her soul betray.  
 “ Then, as coy fears th’ admiring gaze upbraid,  
 “ Starts;—and these lines, with hurried pen pourtray’d,  
 “ Slides in his half-clos’d hand;—and speeds away.—  
 ‘ Ye eyes, ye human stars!—if, thus conceal’d  
 ‘ By Sleep’s soft veil, ye agitate my heart,  
 ‘ Ah! what had been its conflict if reveal’d  
 ‘ Your rays had shone!’—Bright Nymph, thy strains impart  
 “ Hopes, that impel the graceful Bard to rove,  
 “ Seeking thro’ Tuscan Vales his visionary Love.  
 “ He found her not;—yet much the Poet found,  
 “ To swell Imagination’s golden store,  
 “ On Arno’s bank, and on that bloomy shore,  
 “ Warbling Parthenope; in the wide bound,  
 “ Where Rome’s forlorn Campania stretches round  
 “ Her ruin’d towers and temples;—classick lore  
 “ Breathing sublimer spirit from the power  
 “ Of local consciousness,—Thrice happy wound,  
 “ Given by his sleeping graces, as the Fair  
 ‘ Hung over them enamour’d,’ the desire  
 “ Thy fond result inspir’d, that wing’d him there,  
 “ Where breath’d each Roman and each Tuscan Lyre,  
 “ Might haply fan the emulative flame,  
 “ That rose o’er DANTE’S song, and rivall’d MARO’S  
 “ fame.”

*Original Sonnets &c. by Anna Seward, 1799, p. 76.*



to Grotius. Of this interview, although the numerous letters of Grotius afford no trace, Milton's nephew gives the following account ; Grotius took the visit kindly, and gave him entertainment suitable to his worth and the high commendations he had heard of him.

Having been presented, by Lord Scudamore, with letters of recommendation to the English merchants in the several places through which he intended to travel, he went, after staying a few days in Paris, directly to Nice, where he embarked for Genoa. From Genoa he proceeded to Leghorn, Pisa, and Florence. The delights of Florence detained him there two months. His compositions and conversation were so much admired, that he was a most welcome guest in the academies, (as in Italy the meetings of the most polite and ingenious persons are denominated,) held in that city. He has affectionately recorded the <sup>i</sup> names of these Italian friends ;

<sup>i</sup> “ Tui enim Jacobe Gaddi, Carole Dati, Frescobalde, Cullentine, Bommatthæe, Clementille, Francine, aliorumque plurium memoriam apud me semper gratam, atque jucundam, nulla dies delebit.” *Defens. sec. Prose-Works*, vol. iii. p. 96. edit. 1698.

It is to one of these friends that he professes his love of the Italian language. “ Ego certè istis utrisque linguis [Greek and Latin] non extremis tantummodò labris madidus ; sed, si quis alius, quantum per annos licuit, poculis majoribus prolutus, possum tamen nonnunquam ad illum *Dantem*, et *Petrarcam*, aliosque vestros complusculos, libentè et cupidè comessatum ire.” *Epist. B. Bommatthæe. Prose-Works*, vol. iii. p. 325. ed. 1698.



and has expressed his obligations to their honourable distinctions. Dati <sup>k</sup> presented him with a Latin eulogy; and Francini with an Italian ode. A few years since, Mr. Brand accidentally discovered on a book-stall a manuscript which he purchased, entitled *La Tina*, by Antonio Malatesti, not yet enumerated, <sup>1</sup> says Mr. Warton, among Milton's friends. It is dedicated by the author to John Milton while at Florence. Mr. Brand gave it to Mr. Hollis, who, in 1758, sent it together with Milton's works, both in poetry and prose, and his Life by Toland, to the Academy Della Crusca. The manuscript, as Mr. Warton observes, would have been a greater curiosity in England. Milton became acquainted also with the celebrated Galileo, whom many biographers have represented as in prison when the poet visited him. But Mr. Walker has informed me that Galileo was never a prisoner *in* the inquisition at Florence, although a

<sup>k</sup> Rolli has made the following remark on the commendatory notices of his countrymen. "Offervissi nelle lodi dagl' Italiani date a questo grand Uomo; com' essi fin d' allora scorgevano in lui l' alta forza d' Ingegno che lo portava al primo Auge di gloria letteraria nel suo Secolo e nella sua Nazione; e gliene facevano gli avverati Prognostici." Vita di Milton, 1735.

Dennis pays much compliment to the discernment of the Italians who discovered, while Milton was among them, his great and growing genius. See his Original Letters, &c. 1721, vol. i. p. 78, 80.

<sup>1</sup> Milton's Smaller Poems, 2d edit. p. 555. But Milton mentions this friend in a letter to Carlo Dati, *Epist. Fam.* x.



prisoner of it. On his arrival at Rome on February the 10th, 1632, that illustrious philosopher had surrendered himself to Urban, who ordered him to be confined for his philosophical heresy in the palace of the Trinità de' Monti. Here he remained five months. Having retracted his opinion, he was dismissed from Rome; and the house of Monsignor Piccolomini in Sienna was assigned to him as his prison. About the beginning of December, in 1633, he was liberated; and returned to the village of Belloguardo near Florence, whence he went to Arcetri, where, it is probable, he received the visit of the English bard. Milton himself has informed us that he had really seen Galileo; and Rolli, in his Life of the poet, <sup>m</sup> considers some ideas in the *Paradise Lost*, approaching towards the Newtonian philosophy, to have been caught at Florence from Galileo or his disciples.

From Florence he passed through Sienna to Rome, where he also stayed two months; feasting, as Dr. Newton well observes, both his eyes and his mind, and delighted with the fine paintings, and sculptures, and other rarities and antiquities, of the city. It has been judiciously

<sup>m</sup> “ In Firenze certamente egli apprese dagli Scritti e dalle Massime del Galileo invalorite già ne' di lui Seguaci, quelle Nozioni filosofiche sparse poi nel Poema, che tanto si uniformano al Sistema del Cavalier Newton.” Vita, &c. 1735.



conjectured, that several of the immortal works of the finest painters and statuaries may be traced in Milton's poetry. They are supposed by Mr. Hayley to have had considerable influence in attaching his imagination to our first parents. "He had most probably contemplated them," the elegant writer continues, "not only in the colours of Michael Angelo, who decorated Rome with his picture of the creation, but in the marble of Bandinelli, who had executed two large statues of Adam and Eve, which, though they were far from satisfying the taste of connoisseurs, might stimulate even by their imperfections the genius of a poet." The description of the creation in the third book of *Paradise Lost*, (line 708, 719,) is supposed by Mr. Walker to be copied from the same subject as treated by Raphael in the gallery of the Vatican, called "la Bibbia di Raffaello." There are indeed several interesting pictures relating to Adam and Eve in the Florence collection, together with "the fall of Lucifer" supposed to be the work of Michael Angelo, which Milton might have also seen. Mr. Dunster ingeniously conjectures the *Paradise Regained* to have been enriched by the suggestions of Salvator Rosa's masterly painting of *The Temptation*. The genius

▪ Hist. Mem. on Italian Tragedy, p. 166.

• Addition to his edit. of *Par. Reg.* 1800.



of Milton seems to have resembled more particularly that of Michael Angelo. It is worthy of notice, as it shows a strong coincidence of taste in the poet and the painter, that Michael Angelo was particularly struck with Dante; and that he is said to have <sup>p</sup> sketched with a pen, on the margin of his copy of the *Inferno*, every striking scene of the terrible and the pathetick; but this valuable curiosity was unfortunately lost in a shipwreck. The learned author of “Tableaux tirés de l’Iliade, de l’Odyssée d’Homere, et de l’Eneide de Virgile,” was never more mistaken than in supposing the *Paradise Lost* incapable of supplying an artist with scenes as graceful and sublime as can be met with in the poems of the Grecian and Roman bards: for, in the words of Mr. Hayley, there is no charm exhibited by painting, which Milton’s poetry has failed to equal, as far as analogy between the different arts can extend. Indeed the numerous exercises for the painter’s skill, which Milton’s works afford, have, in later times, commanded due attention; and Fuseli, by his happy sketches from such originals, has taught us how to admire poetry and painting “breathing *united force*.”

At Rome Milton was honoured with the acquaintance of several learned men; more especially with that of Holstenius, keeper of the Va-

<sup>p</sup> See “A Sketch of the Lives and Writings of Dante and Petrarch, 1790.” p. 31.



tican library. By him he was introduced to Cardinal Barberini, the <sup>1</sup> patron Cardinal of the English; who, at an entertainment of musick, performed at his own expence, waited for him at the door, and condescended to lead him into the assembly. Milton did not forget the extraordinary civilities of this accomplished Cardinal. In thanking Holstenius afterwards for all his favours to him, he adds <sup>r</sup> “De cætero, novo beneficio devinxeris, si <sup>s</sup> *Eminentissimum* Cardi-

<sup>1</sup> I learn from the manuscript of Dr. Bargrave, (preserved in the Library of Canterbury Cathedral,) of which an ample account is given in my Note on Milton's Epigram to Christina, Queen of Sweden, that, “at Rome, euery forraigne Nation hath some Cardinall or other to be their *peculiar Gardian*: when I was 4 feuerall times at Rome,” says Dr. Bargrave, “this Cardinall Barberini was *Gardian to the Inglish*.” He adds, “When I was at Rome with the Earle of Chesterfield, then under my tuition, 1650, at a yeare of Jubile, this Cardinall (formerly kinde to me) would not admitt my lord or myselfe to any audience, though, in eleuen months time, tryed feuerall times: and I heard that it was, because that we had commendatory letters from our Queen Mother to Cardinall Capponius, and another from the Dutcheffs of Sauoy to Cardinall Penzirolo; and no letters to him, *who was the Inglish (I say REBELLS) Protector*; and that we visited them before him.”

<sup>r</sup> Lit. Lucæ Holstenio, dat. Florent. Mart. 30. 1639, Prose-Works, vol. iii. p. 327. edit. 1698.

<sup>s</sup> Milton, it may be observed, is careful not to omit the *title* first applied to the Cardinals by Barberini: since whose time, Dr. Bargrave relates, “the title of *Padrone* continueth to the Pope's chiefe Nephew, and the title of *Eminenza* to all the Cardinalls. Indeed the authority which Urban VIII. gave to Francisco [Barberini, his eldest Nephew,] was *not ordinary*; for he thought it not enough to giue the powre, except he gaue it the vanety and



nalem quantâ potest observantiâ meo nomine salutes, cujus magnæ virtutes, rectique studium, ad provehendas item omnes artes liberales egregiè comparatum, semper mihi ob oculos versatur.”

At Rome also, Selvaggi and Salfilli praised the attainments of Milton in those verses, which are prefixed to his Latin poetry.

He next removed to Naples, in company with a hermit; to whom Milton owed his introduction to the patron of Tasso, Manso, marquis of Villa, a nobleman distinguished by his virtue and his learning. To this eminent person he was obliged in many important instances; and, as a testimony of gratitude, he presented to him, at his departure from Naples, his beautiful eclogue, entitled *Mansus*; which Dr. Johnson acknowledges must have raised in the noble Italian an high opinion of English elegance and literature.

title of Padrone, that is, Master and Lord, a title never heard of before at Rome. But Urban had nothing in his mouth but the Cardinall Padrone: Where is the Cardinall Padrone? Call the Cardinall Padrone: Speake to the Cardinall Padrone: Nothing was heard of but the Cardinall Padrone; which the embassadors of Princes did not like, saying they had no Padrone but the Pope himselfe. However their [the Barberinis'] ambition stayed not at this title: they tooke exceptions of the quality of *Illustrissimo*, with which hitherto the Cardinals had binn content for so many ages. The title of Excellency belonging to soveraine Princes in Italy, they strove to find out something that should not be inferiour to it; and, canvassing many titles, at length they pitched upon *Eminency*, which the Princes hearing of, they took upon themselves the title of Highness.” MS. as before.



Manſo likewiſe has addreſſed a diſtich to Milton, which is prefixed to the Latin poems.

From Naples Milton intended to proceed to Sicily and Athens: “countries,” as Mr. Warton has excellently obſerved, “connected with his finer feelings, interwoven with his poetical ideas, and impreſſed upon his imagination by his habits of reading, and by long and intimate converſe with the Grecian literature. But ſo prevalent were his patriotick attachments, that, hearing in Italy of the commencement of the national quarrel, inſtead of proceeding forward to ſeaſt his fancy with the contemplation of ſcenes familiar to Theocritus and Homer, the pines of Etna and the paſtures of Peneus, he abruptly changed his courſe, and haſtily returned home to plead the cauſe of ideal liberty. Yet in this chaos of controverſy, amidſt endleſs diſputes concerning religious and political reformation, independency, prelacy, tithes, toleration, and tyranny, he ſometimes ſeems to have heaved a ſigh for the peaceable enjoyments of lettered ſolitude, for his congenial purſuits, and the more mild and ingenuous exerciſes of the muſe. In a Letter to Henry Oldenburgh, written in 1654, he ſays, “*Hoc cum libertatis adverſariis inopinatum certamen, diverſis longè et amœnioribus*

\* Preface to his Edition of the Smaller Poems.

“ Proſe-Works, vol. iii. p. 330. ed. 1698.



omnino me studiis intentum, ad se rapuit *invitum*.' And in one of his prose-tracts, \* 'I may one day hope to have ye again in a still time, when there shall be no Chiding. Not in these Noises.' And in another, having mentioned some of his schemes for epick poetry and tragedy, 'of highest hope and hardest attempting' he adds, † 'With what small willingness I endure to interrupt the pursuit of no less hopes than these, and leave a calm and pleasing solitariness, fed with cheerful and confident thoughts, to embark in a troubled sea of noises and hoarse disputes, from beholding the bright countenance of Truth in the quiet and still air of delightfull studies, &c.' He still, however, obstinately persisted in what he thought his duty. But surely these speculations should have been consigned to the enthusiasts of the age, to such restless and wayward spirits as Prynne, Hugh Peters, Goodwyn, and Baxter. Minds less refined, and faculties less elegantly cultivated, would have been better employed in this task:

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Coarse complexions,  
 ' And cheeks of sorry grain, will serve to ply  
 ' The sampler, and to tease the hufwife's wool:  
 ' What need a vermeil-tinctur'd lip for that,  
 ' Love-darting eyes, and tresses like the morn?' —"

\* Apol. Smeſtymn. 1642.

† Church-Governm. B. ii. 1641.



He returned by the way of Rome, though some mercantile friends had acquainted him that the Jesuits there were forming plots against him, for the liberty of his conversation upon matters of religion. He paid little attention to the <sup>2</sup> advice of his friend Sir Henry Wotton, "to keep his thoughts close, and his countenance open." Nor did the liberal and polished Manso omit to acquaint him, at his departure, that he would have shown him more considerable favours, if his conduct had been less unguarded. He is supposed to have given offence by having visited Galileo. And he had been with difficulty restrained from publickly asserting, within the verge of the Vatican, the cause of Protestantism. While Milton, however, defended his principles without hypocrisy, he appears not to have courted contest. When he was questioned as to his faith, he was too honest to conceal his sentiments, too dauntless to relinquish them. He staid at Rome two months more without fear, and indeed without molestation. From Rome he proceeded to Florence, where he was received with the most lively marks of affection by his friends, and made a second residence of two months. From Florence he visited Lucca: Then, crossing the Apennine, he passed by the way of Bologna and

<sup>2</sup> See the Prelim. Notes to *Comus*, in this edition, vol. v. p. 183.



Ferrara to Venice, in which city he spent a month. From Venice he took his course through Verona, Milan, and along the lake Lemano, to Geneva. After spending some time in this city, where he became acquainted with <sup>a</sup> Giovanni Diodati, and Frederic Spanheim, he returned through France, and came home after an absence of fifteen months. Mr. Hayley has admirably observed, that, “in the relation which Milton gives himself of his return, the name of Geneva recalling to his mind one of the most slanderous of his political adversaries, he animates his narrative by a solemn appeal to Heaven on his unspotted integrity; he protests that, during his residence in foreign scenes, where licentiousness was universal, his own conduct was perfectly irreproachable. I dwell the more zealously on whatever may elucidate the moral character of Milton; because, even among those who love and revere him, the splendour of the poet has in some measure eclipsed the merit of the man; but in proportion as the particulars of his life are studied with intelligence and candour, his virtue will become, as it ought to be, the friendly rival of his genius, and receive its due share of admiration and esteem.”

His return happened about the time of the King's second expedition against the Scots, in

<sup>a</sup> See the Notes on *Epitaph. Dam.* vol. vi. p. 361.



which his forces under lord Conway were defeated by general Lefley, in the month of August 1639. In a Bible, <sup>b</sup> said to have been once in his possession, (probably the constant companion of his travels,) is a manuscript remark, dated 1639 at Canterbury city, which may serve to show the powerful impression made on his mind, (admitting the authenticity of the remark,) by this eventful period. "This year of very dreadful commotion, and I weene will ensue murderous times of conflicting fight." The date of the year and place may lead us to suppose that, having landed at Dover, he was on his return from his travels to London. The gentleman, who communicated the intelligence of this Bible to the publick, and had been indulged with a sight of it, selected other marginal observations which appeared to him remarkable; among which is the following poetical note on I. Maccab. xiv. 6. "Now when it was heard at Rome, and as far as Sparta, that Jonathan was dead, they were very forry:"

"When that day of death shall come,

"Then shall nightly shades prevaile;

"Soone shall love and musick faile;

"Soone the fresh turfe's tender blade

"Shall flourish on my sleeping shade."

The authenticity of the remarks, and of the

<sup>b</sup> Gentleman's Magazine, July 1792, p. 615.



Bible having belonged to Milton, has indeed been <sup>c</sup> questioned ; but has been defended, not without considerable force, by the communicator himself, and by other writers in the valuable miscellany, in which the information has been given ; to the demonstrations and conjectures of whom I refer the reader. <sup>d</sup>

Before we attend to the busier scenes of life, in which Milton, now returned to his native country, became engaged ; let me be permitted to lament that he never executed the scheme, which he once proposed to himself in his animated lines to Manso, of <sup>e</sup> “ embellishing original tales of chivalry, of clothing the fabulous achievements of the early British kings and champions in the gorgeous trappings of epick attire.” The delight which he had derived from the romances of Italy now sunk into neglect ; not however into forgetfulness. In his latest poems he seems to look back, not without an eye of fond regard, to the more distinguished compositions of this kind ; to the *Innamoramento di Lancilotto*, and *Tristano*, both by Agostini ; to the history of the same heroes, with other knights of the round table, by Tramezzino ; and to the *Lan-*

<sup>c</sup> Gent. Mag. September 1792, p. 789.

<sup>d</sup> Gent. Mag. Oct. 1792, p. 900. And Ibid. Gent. Mag. February 1793, p. 106. Gent. Mag. March 1800, p. 199.

<sup>e</sup> See Mr. Warton's Preface to the Smaller Poems.



*cilotto* also of Valvasone, the author of *L'Angeleida*.<sup>f</sup>

At his return he heard of the death of his beloved friend and schoolfellow, Charles Diodati. And he lamented his loss in that elegant eclogue, the *Epitaphium Damonis*, which Mr. Warton has successfully defended against the cold remark of Dr. Johnson.<sup>g</sup>

He now hired a lodging in St. Bride's Church-yard, Fleet-street; where he undertook the education of his sister's sons, John and Edward Philips,<sup>h</sup> "the first ten, the other nine years of age; and in a year's time made them capable of interpreting a Latin author at sight." Finding his house not sufficiently large for his library and furniture, he took a handsome<sup>i</sup> garden-house in Aldersgate street, situated at the end of

<sup>f</sup> See the Inquiry into the Origin of Paradise Lost, p. 280.

<sup>g</sup> Note at the end of the poem.

<sup>h</sup> Aubrey's MS.

<sup>i</sup> From the Note signed H. in Dr. Johnson's Life of Milton, *Lives of the Poets*, ed. 1794, vol. i. p. 130, it appears, that there were many of these *garden-houses*, i. e. houses situated in a garden, especially in the north suburbs of London; and that the term is technical, frequently occurring in the Athen. and Fast. Oxon. The annotator adds, that the meaning may be collected from the article Thomas Farnabe, the famous schoolmaster; of whom the author says, that he taught in Goldsmith's rents, in Cripple-gate parish, behind Redcross-street, where were large gardens and handsome houses: Milton's house in Jewin-street was also a *garden-house*, as we see indeed most of his dwellings after his settlement in London.



an entry, that he might avoid the noise and disturbance of the street. Here he received into his house a few more pupils, the sons of <sup>k</sup> his most intimate friends; and he proceeded, with cheerfulness, in the noblest employment of mankind, that of instructing others in knowledge and virtue. "As he was severe on one hand," says Aubrey, "so he was most familiar and free in his conversation to those whom he must serve in his way of education." His younger nephew has related the method of his instruction, and the books employed. Of the Latin, the four authors concerning husbandry, Cato, Varro, Columella, and Palladius; Cornelius Celsus, the physician; a great part of Pliny's natural history; the Architecture of Vitruvius; the Stratagems of Frontinus; and the philosophical poets, Lucretius and Manilius. Of the Greek, Hesiod; Aratus's *Phænomena* and *Diosemeia*; Dionysius Afer de situ orbis; Oppian's *Cynegeticks* and *Halieuticks*; Quintus Calaber's poem of the Trojan war, continued from Homer; Apollonius Rhodius's *Argonauticks*; and in prose Plutarch's *Placita philosophorum*, and of the Education of children; Xenophon's *Cyropædia* and *Anabasis*; Ælian's *Tacticks*; and the *Stratagems* of Polyænus. Nor did this applica-

<sup>k</sup> See the Note on Lawes's Dedication of *Comus* to Lord Brackley, vol. v. p. 177.



tion to the Greek and Latin tongues impede the cultivation of the chief oriental languages, the Hebrew, Chaldee, and Syriack, so far as to go through the Pentateuch, to make a good entrance into the Targum or Chaldee paraphrase, and to understand several chapters of St. Matthew in the Syriack Testament; besides the modern languages, Italian and French; and a knowledge of mathematicks and astronomy. The Sunday exercise for his pupils was, principally, to read a chapter of the Greek Testament, and to hear his learned exposition of it: to which was added the writing, from his dictation, some part of a system of divinity, which he had collected from the ablest divines who had written upon the subject. From the rigid attention which such a system required he occasionally relaxed; and once in three or four weeks the hard study and spare diet, of which he was an eminent example to his pupils, gave way to the regale of a gaudy day with some young gentlemen of his acquaintance; the chief of whom, says his nephew, “were Mr. Alphry and Mr. Miller, the beaus of those times, but nothing near so bad as those now-a-days!” These were the seasons in which Milton “resolved to drench in mirth that, after, no repenting draws,” and in which he would not forfeit his pretensions of admission into the train of the true Euphrosyne:



——“ In thy right hand lead with thee  
“ The mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty ;  
“ And, if I give thee *honour due*,  
“ *Mirth*, admit me of thy crew ;  
“ To live with her, and live with thee,  
“ In *unreproved pleasures free*.”

It seems uncandid in Dr. Johnson to have ridiculed the academick institutions of Milton with the title of the “ *wonder-working academy*,” because no man very eminent for knowledge proceeded from it, and because Philips’s small history of poetry is its only genuine product. The merit of Milton’s intention cannot be denied, however the mode of education, which he pursued, may perhaps be justly thought impracticable. His nephew, with great spirit and affection, observes that, if his pupils <sup>1</sup> “ had received his documents with the same acuteness of wit and apprehension, the same industry, alacrity, and thirst after knowledge, as the Instructor was indued with, what prodigies of wit and learning might they have proved ! The scholars might, in some degree, have come near to the equalling of the Master, or at least have in some sort made good what he seems to predict in the close of an elegy he made in the seventeenth year of his age, upon the death of one of his sister’s children, a daughter, who died in her infancy :

<sup>1</sup> Life of Milton, p. xix.



' Then thou, the mother of so sweet a child;  
 ' Her false-imagin'd loss cease to lament,  
 ' And wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild;  
 ' This if thou do, he will an offspring give,  
 ' That, to the world's last end, shall make thy name to live.' <sup>59</sup>

But, though thus employed in the education of youth, Milton now began to sacrifice his time to the harsh and crabbed employment of controversy. In 1641 the clamour ran high against the bishops, and in that clamour he joined, by publishing a treatise *Of Reformation*, in two books; being willing to assist the Puritans in their designs against the established Church, who, as he informs us in his *Second Defence*, were inferior to the bishops in learning. We are to recollect that Milton had before attacked the episcopal clergy, and had even anticipated the execution of Archbishop Laud, in his *Lycidas*, written before he was twenty-nine years old. The antipathy, then clothed in an allegorick veil, now burst into expressions of elaborate and undisguised invective. Of the innovations, caused in the ceremonies of the Church by Laud, and which excited the animadversion of Milton, it may not be improper here to observe, that it has been <sup>m</sup> said by a great scholar, and most excellent historian in ecclesiastical no less than in civil matters, that every ceremony, of which Laud enforced the observation, is to be found in the

<sup>m</sup> See the *Europ. Magazine*, vol. xxviii. p. 379.



ritual of Andrews, bishop of Winchester, who was styled the antipapistical prelate. Laud, in his speech delivered at the Star-Chamber, when he passed judgement on Bastwick, Burton, and Prynne, thus vindicates himself, p. 4, &c. “<sup>n</sup> I can say it clearly and truly as in the presence of God, I have done nothing, as a prelate, to the uttermost of what I am conscious, but with a single heart, and with a sincere intention for the good government and honour of the Church, and the maintenance of the orthodox truth and religion of Christ professed, established, and maintained, in this Church of England. For my care of this Church, the reducing of it into order, the upholding of the externall worship of God in it, and the settling of it to the rules of its first reformation, are the causes (and the sole causes, whatever are pretended,) of *this malicious storme, which hath lowred so black upon me, and some of my brethren*. And in the meane time they, which are the only or the chief *innovators* of the Christian world, having nothing to say, *accuse us of innovation*; they themselves and their complices in the meane time being the *greatest innovators*

<sup>n</sup> “ A Speech delivered in the Starre-Chamber, on Wednesday the xiv<sup>th</sup> of June, MDCXXXVII, at the censure of John Bastwick, Henry Burton, and William Prinn; concerning pretended Innovations in the Church. By the most reverend father in God, William, L. Archbishop of Canterbury. London, printed by R. Badger, 1637.”



that the Christian world hath almost ever known. I deny not but others have spread more dangerous errors in the Church of Christ; but no men, in any age of it, have been *more guilty of innovation* than they, while themselves cry out against it: *Quis tulerit Gracchos?* And I said wel, *Quis tulerit Gracchos?* For 'tis most apparent to any man that will not winke, that the *intention of these men, and their abettors, was and is to raise a sedition; being as great incendiaries in the State (where they get power) as they have ever been in the Church;* Novatian himselfe hardly greater. Our maine crime is (would they all speake out, as some of them do,) that we are bishops; were we not so, some of us might be as passable as other men." To those, who would examine attentively the ecclesiastical controversy of this period, I recommend the perusal of the whole speech.

In 1641, the eloquent Hall, bishop of Norwich, having published an *Humble Remonstrance* in favour of Episcopacy, five ministers, under the title of *Smectymnuus*, a word formed from the first letters of their ° names, wrote an *Answer*; of which Archbishop Usher published a *Confu-*

◦ Stephen Marshall, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young (Milton's preceptor), Matthew Newcomen, and William Spinstow, the initial letter of whose Christian name is quaintly divided, in order to produce this celebrated word! This is to be enumerated among the few playful tricks of fanaticism.



*tation.* To this *Confutation* Milton replied in his *Treatise Of Prelatical Episcopacy*. And, although he has ungracefully classed the archbishop's *Confutation* with "some late treatises, one whereof goes under the name of James, Lord bishop of Armagh," he has, in his next publication, complimented the excellent prelate for his learning. With such an adversary as Usher, indeed, which of the *Smeſtymnuans* would have dared to cope? This enterprize none *could* partake with Milton. Vehement as he was in his reply to the two bishops, he also enlarged this topick of puritanical zeal in another performance, entitled *The Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty*, in two books. And, bishop Hall having published *A Defence of the Humble Remonstrance*, he wrote *Animadversions* upon it. These treatises were the fruits of his prejudice against the established Church in 1641. From the third treatise, *The Reason of Church Government*, we derive some knowledge of his literary projects, and of the opinion he entertained of his own abilities; expressed, as Dr. Johnson well observes, not with ostentatious exultation, but with calm confidence; with a promise to undertake something, he yet knows not what, that may be of use and honour to his country. The whole passage, from which Dr. Johnson has cited a small part as a fervid, pious, and rational pledge of the *Paradise Lost*, however well known to the ad-



mirers of the poet, is too sublime and interesting to be read again and again without renewed and encreased delight. “<sup>p</sup> Time serves not now, and, perhaps, I might seem too profuse to give any certain account of what the mind at home, in the spacious circuits of her musing, hath liberty to propose to herself, though of highest hope and hardest attempting; whether that epick form, whereof the two poems of Homer, and those other two of Virgil and Tasso, are a diffuse, and the book of Job a brief, model; or whether the rules of Aristotle herein are strictly to be kept, or nature to be followed; which in them that know art, and use judgement, is no transgression, but an enriching of art: and lastly, what king or knight, before the Conquest, might be chosen, in whom to lay the pattern of a christian hero. And as Tasso gave to a prince of Italy his choice, whether he would command him to write of Godfrey’s expedition against the infidels, Belisarius against the Goths, or Charlemain against the Lombards; if to the instinct of nature, and the emboldening of art, aught may be trusted, and that there be nothing adverse in our climate, or the fate of this age, it haply would be no rashness, from an equal diligence and inclination, to present the like offer in our ancient stories. Or whether those dramatick constitutions, wherein

<sup>p</sup> Introduction to the second Book.



Sophocles and Euripides reign, shall be found more doctrinal and exemplary to a nation.—Or, if occasion shall lead, to imitate those magnifick odes and hymns, wherein Pindarus and Callimachus are in most things worthy. But those frequent songs throughout the Law and Prophets, beyond all these, not in their divine argument alone, but in the very critical art of composition, may be easily made appear over all the kinds of lyrick poesy to be incomparable. These abilities, wheresoever they be found, are the inspired gift of God, rarely bestowed, but yet to some (though most abuse) in every nation; and are of power, besides the office of a pulpit, to inbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue and publick civility, to allay the perturbations of the mind, and set the affections in right tune; to celebrate in glorious and lofty hymns the throne and equipage of God's Almightiness, and what he works, and what he suffers to be wrought, with high providence in his church; to sing victorious agonies of martyrs and saints, the deeds and triumphs of just and pious nations doing valiantly through faith against the enemies of Christ; to deplore the general relapses of kingdoms and states from justice and God's true worship. Lastly, whatsoever in religion is holy and sublime, in virtue amiable or grave, whatsoever hath passion or ad-



miration in all the changes of that, which is called fortune from without, or the wily subtleties and reflexes of man's thoughts from within; all these things, with a solid and treatable smoothness to paint out and describe, teaching over the whole book of sanctity and virtue, through all the instances of example, with such delight, to those especially of soft and delicious temper, who will not so much as look upon Truth herself, unless they see her elegantly drest; that whereas the paths of honesty and good life appear now rugged and difficult, though they be indeed easy and pleasant, they will then appear to all men both easy and pleasant, though they were rugged and difficult indeed.—

“ The thing which I had to say, and those intentions, which have lived within me ever since I could conceive myself any thing worth to my country, I return to crave excuse that urgent reason hath pluckt from me by an abortive and fore-dated discovery; and the accomplishment of them lies not but in a power above man's to promise; but that none hath by more studious ways endeavoured, and with more unwearied spirit than none shall, that I dare almost aver of myself, as far as life and free leisure will extend. Neither do I think it shame to covenant with any knowing reader that for some few years yet I may go on trust with him toward the payment



of what I am now indebted, as being a work not to be raised from the heat of youth, or the vapours of wine, like that which flows at waste from the pen of some vulgar amorist, or the trencher fury of a rhyming parasite; nor to be obtained by the invocation of dame Memory and her Siren daughters; but by devout prayer to that eternal Spirit, who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his Seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases: to this must be added industrious and select reading, steady observation, insight into all seemly and generous arts and affairs; till which in some measure be compassed at mine own peril and cost I refuse not to sustain this expectation from as many as are not loth to hazard so much credulity upon the best pledges that I can give them. Although it nothing content me to have disclosed thus much before hand; but that I trust hereby to make it manifest with what small willingness I endure to interrupt the pursuit of no less hopes than these, and leave a calm and pleasing solitariness, fed with cheerful and confident thoughts, to imbark in a troubled sea of noise and hoarse disputes, put from beholding the bright countenance of Truth, in the quiet and still air of delightfull studies."

In 1642, he closed the controversy with an *Apology for Smeſtymnuus*, in answer to the *Con-*



*putation of his Animadversions*, written, as he supposed, by bishop Hall or his son. He thought all this while, says Dr. Newton, that he was vindicating ecclesiastical liberty. Yet he has confessed, that he was not disposed to “<sup>¶</sup> this manner of writing, wherein knowing myself inferior to myself, led by the genial power of nature to another task, I have the use, as I may account it, but of my left hand.” *This left hand*, indeed, has recorded too many sentiments which we must reject, too many expressions which we must lament. By his asperity the repulsive form of puritanism is rendered more hideous and disgusting, and the cause which he would support is weakened.

At Whitsuntide in 1643, and in his thirty-fifth year, he married Mary, the daughter of Richard Powell, a gentleman who resided at Forest Hill near Shotover in Oxfordshire, and was a justice of the peace for the county. He brought his bride to London; who, after living only a few weeks with him, obtained his consent to accept the invitation of her friends to spend the remaining part of the summer with them in the country. He gave her permission to stay till Michaelmas; but she declined to return at the expiration of that period. The visit to her friends was, in fact, only a pretence for conjugal de-

<sup>¶</sup> Introduction to the second Book of his Reason of Church Government.



fection. This desertion has been imputed, by Philips, to the different principles of the two families. Her relations, he tells us, “ being generally addicted to the Cavalier party, and some of them possibly ingaged in the King’s service, (who by this time had his head quarters at Oxford, and was in some prospect of success,) they began to repent them of having matched the eldest daughter of the family to a person so contrary to them in opinion; and thought it would be a blot in their escutcheon, whenever that Court should come to flourish again: however, it so incensed our author, that he thought it would be dishonourable ever to receive her again after such a repulse.” The same biographer intimates, that she was averse to the philosophick life of Milton, and sighed for the mirth and jovialness to which she had been accustomed in Oxfordshire. And Aubrey relates, that she “<sup>r</sup> was brought up and bred where there was a great deal of company and merriment, as dancing, &c.; and, when she came to live with her husband, she found it solitary, no company came to her, and she often heard her nephews cry and be beaten. This life was irksome to her, and so she went to her parents. He sent for her home after some time. As for wronging his bed, I never heard the least suspicion of that; nor had

<sup>r</sup> MS. as before.



he of that any jealousy." He sent for her, however, in vain. As all his letters, desiring her to return, were unanswered; so the messenger, whom he afterwards employed for the same purpose, was dismissed from her father's house with contempt. He resolved therefore to repudiate her; and, in defence of his resolution, he published four treatises, the two first in 1644, the two last in 1645. *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*; *The Judgement of Martin Bucer concerning Divorce*; *Tetrachordon*, or Expositions upon the four chief Places of Scripture which treat of Marriage, or Nullities in Marriage; and *Colasterion*. The last is a reply to the anonymous author of "An Answer to a Book, intituled *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, or a Plea for Ladies and Gentlewomen, and all other Married Women against Divorce. Wherein both Sexes are vindicated from all bondage of Canon Law, and other mistakes whatsoever; and the unsound principles of the Author are examined and fully confuted by Authority of Holy Scripture, the Laws of this Land, and sound Reason. Lond. 1644." This pamphlet was licensed and recommended by Mr. Joseph Caryl, a Presbyterian divine, and author of a voluminous commentary on the book of Job; whom Milton, in his reply, roughly stigmatizes with repeated charges of ignorance, as he also styles his antagonist, "a



serving-man both by nature and by function, an idiot by breeding, and a solicitor by presumption!" The application of these and similar terms, in the dispute, may remind us of the *elegant dialogue* between Nym and Pistol in <sup>s</sup> King Henry the fifth: but there a wife retained, and not a wife repudiated, is the cause of so much eloquence!

There had been another tract written against Milton's doctrine, which he briefly notices at the beginning of his *Colasterion*, entitled "Divorce at pleasure." Nor was he inattentive to the remark of Dr. Featley, who in the Epistle Dedicatory to his "Dippers dipt," published in 1645, enumerates, among "the audacious attempts upon Church and State, a *Tractate of Divorce*, in which the bonds of marriage are let loose to inordinate lust, and putting away wives for many other causes besides that which our Saviour only approveth, namely, in case of adultery." Milton speaks contemptuously of the author as having written an "equivocating treatise," and as "diving the while himself with a more deep prelati- cal malignance against the present State and Church-government." Dr. Johnson and Mr. Warton are mistaken in supposing the new doctrine to have been unnoticed, or neglected: indeed the two Sonnets, which Milton wrote on the same subject, seem to discountenance the opi-

<sup>s</sup> Act ii. Scene i.



nion. It certainly was received with ridicule, as we learn from Howel's <sup>t</sup> Letter to Sir Edward Spencer. But it also gave rise to a band, not perhaps very formidable, who were called *Divorcers*, and even *Miltonists*. Pagitt, in his "Description of the Hereticks and Sectaries" of that period, notices the <sup>u</sup> former sect with him, who wrote the *Treatate of Divorce*, at their head. The latter title occurs in " \* The Epilogue, shewing the Parallell in two Poems, The Return, and The Restauration, Addressed to her Highnesse the Lady Elizabeth, by C. W. 1649." 8vo.

" Force can but in a Rape engage,  
 " 'Tis choice must make it Marriage:  
 " Hence a conveyance they contrive,  
 " Which must on us their cause derive:  
 " This must attaque, what holds out still,  
 " And is impregnable, the Will.  
 " This must enchant our conscions hands,  
 " To slumber in like guilty bands,  
 " While, like the froward *Miltonist*,  
 " We our old nuptiall knot untwist:  
 " And with the hands, late faith did joyn,  
 " The bill of plain Divorce now signe."

But Milton's innovation was also opposed from the pulpit. The presbyterian clergy had not

<sup>t</sup> Letters, 10th edit. p. 455.

<sup>u</sup> Herefiography, &c. 1654. p. 129. See also Ibid. p. 77. And " A brief description &c. of Phanatiques in generall, 1660." p. 33.

\* This book was obligingly pointed out to me by Thomas Park, Esq; to whom the literary world is indebted for some of the sweetest Sonnets in the English language.



only caused him to be summoned before the House of Lords, by whom however he was quickly dismissed; but one of them, in a sermon before the Lords and Commons on a fast-day, had endeavoured in vain to excite their indignation against him. Milton notices this attack in the beginning of his *Tetrachordon*, and thanks the auditors for not repenting of what the preacher called their sin, the neglecting to brand his book with some mark of their displeasure. This opponent, who has been hitherto unnoticed, was Herbert Palmer, B.D. a Member of the Assembly of Divines, and parliamentary Master of Queen's College, Cambridge. "y If any," says he to his judicial audience, "plead conscience for the lawfulness of *polygamy*; (or for *divorce* for other causes than Christ and his Apostles mention; of which a *wicked booke is abroad and uncensured, though deserving to be burnt, whose author bath*

y I had examined many single sermons of this period, under the hope of discovering the author who had thus publicly attacked Milton; but without success. I am indebted to my liberal friend, James Bindley, Esq; for pointing out, after a long research also, this forgotten discourse; of which I will give the title: "The Glasse of God's Providence towards his Faithfull Ones. Held forth in a Sermon preached to the two Houses of Parliament at Margaret's Westminster, Aug. 13. 1644. being an extraordinary day of Humiliation. Wherein is discovered the great failings that the best are liable unto, &c. The whole is applyed specially to a more carefull observation of our late Covenant, and particularly against the ungodly toleration pleaded for *under pretence of Liberty of Conscience*. By Herbert Palmer, B.D. &c."



*been so impudent as to set his name to it, and dedicate it to yourselves,)* or for liberty to marry incestuously, will you grant a toleration for all *this?*” Milton now became an enemy to the Presbyterians, whom he before had favoured. Notwithstanding their opposition, however, he proceeded to illustrate his opinion more forcibly by paying his addressee to a young lady of great wit and beauty, the daughter of one Dr. Davis, with a design to marry her! But this desire of carrying his doctrine into practice was not countenanced by the lady. What is more remarkable, the proceeding contributed to effect a reconciliation with the discarded wife.

In the mean time, Milton pursued his studies with unabating vigour; and, in 1644, at the request of his friend, Mr. Samuel<sup>z</sup> Hartlib, published his tractate *Of Education*; or plan of academical institution: in which, as he expresses it, he leads his scholar from Lilly to his commencing master of arts. Mr. Warton observes, that <sup>a</sup> Milton’s plan has more of show than value. “<sup>b</sup> Education in England,” Dr. Johnson has remarked, “has been in danger of being hurt by

<sup>z</sup> Of this remarkable person the reader may find an account, written by himself, in Kennet’s Register, 1728. p. 868. See also Mr. Warton’s first edition of Milton’s Smaller Poems, p. 116, &c. A Life of Hartlib is a desideratum in English biography.

<sup>a</sup> See his first edition of Milton’s Smaller Poems, p. 117.

<sup>b</sup> Boswell’s Life of Johnson, ed. 1799. vol. iii. p. 382.



two of its greatest men, Milton and Locke. Milton's plan is impracticable, and I suppose has never been tried. Locke's, I fancy, has been tried often enough, but is very imperfect; it gives too much to one side, and too little to the other; it gives too little to literature." It is perhaps not generally known that Milton's book has been translated into French. The translator has bestowed much "eulogium upon the author. In the same year, Milton published his *Areopagitica*, a Speech for the liberty of unlicensed Printing: perhaps the best vindication, as Dr. Newton observes, that has been published at

" Dans les tems que nous nous proposons de donner ces Lettres au Public, il nous en est tombé entre les mains *une de Milton*, qui n' a pas encore paru dans notre langue, &c.—Rien ne fait tant d' honneur à l' Angleterre que de voir que *le plus grand poëte*, et l' un de plus celebres philosophes [Locke], qu' elle ait eus, ont assez senti de quelle importance étoit l' éducation des enfans, pour s' en occuper serieusement.—Dans *cette Lettre* il est aisé de s' appercevoir que ç' a été un des plus sçavans hommes qui ayent vécu. C'est par cette vaste érudition, joint à un heureux génie, qu' il est devenu le plus grand de tous les poëtes modernes. Aussi son *Paradis Perdu* n' est-il pas l' ouvrage de sa jeunesse : Peut-être alors en avoit-il conçu l' idée ; mais avant que de l' exécuter, il avoit vécu avec les hommes, il avoit connu l' usage et la puissance des passions, il avoit l' esprit orné de la connoissance de toutes les sciences & de tous les arts. Sans examiner si la maniere d' élever la jeunesse que Milton propose est aisée à réduire en pratique ; il est sur que son plan est rempli de vûes très-fines & très-sages, & qu' il paroît contenir tout ce qui est nécessaire pour former un citoyen utile à sa patrie & agréable à la société." Lettres sur L'Education des Princes. Avec une Lettre de Milton, &c. 1746. Preface, pp. lxxv, lxxix.



any time, or in any language, of that liberty which is the basis and support of all other liberties, the liberty of the press. But the candid critick adds, that it produced not the desired effect; for the Presbyterians were as fond of exercising the licensing power, when they got it into their own hands, as they had been clamorous before in inveighing against it, while it was in the hands of the Prelates.

His father having come to live with him, after the surrender of Reading to the Earl of Essex in 1643, and his scholars now encreasing, he required a larger house; before his removal to which, he was surpris'd, at one of his usual visits to a relation in the lane of St. Martin's-le-grand, to see his wife come from another room, and beg forgiveness on her knees. The interview on her part had been concerted. The declining state of the royal cause, and consequently of her father's family, as well as the intelligence of Milton's determination to marry again, caused her friends to employ every method to re-unite the insulted husband and disobedient wife. It was contriv'd that she should be ready, when he came, in another apartment. Fenton, in his elegant sketch of the poet's life, judiciously remarks, that " <sup>d</sup> it is not to be doubted but an

<sup>d</sup> Prefixed to his edition of *Paradise Lost*, first published in 1725.



interview of that nature, so little expected, must wonderfully affect him: and perhaps the impressions it made on his imagination contributed much to the painting of that pathetick scene in *Paradise Lost*, in which Eve addresses herself to Adam for pardon and peace. At the intercession of his friends who were present, after a short reluctance, he generously sacrificed all his resentment to her tears:

————— ‘ Soon his heart relented

‘ Towards her, his life so late, and sole delight,

‘ Now at his feet submissive in distress.’

And after this re-union so far was he from retaining an unkind memory of the provocations which he had received from her ill conduct, that, when the king’s cause was entirely oppressed, and her father who had been active in his loyalty was exposed to sequestration, Milton received both him and his family to protection and free entertainment, in his own house, till their affairs were accommodated by his interest in the victorious faction.” Mr. Powell, however, seems to have smarted severely for his attachment to the royal party. I observe, in the “ Catalogue of the Lords, Knights, and Gentlemen, that have compounded for their Estates,” printed at London in 1655, that he was thus branded as well as fined: “ Richard Powel, *Delinquent*, per John Pye, Esq; 576l. 12s. 3d.” And his house had been before seized by the rebels.



At the time of Milton's reconciliation with his wife, it was settled that she should reside in the house of a friend, till his new mansion, which he had procured in <sup>e</sup> Barbican, was ready for the reception of his increased household. When it is considered that Milton cheerfully opened his doors to those who had treated him with indignity and breach of faith; to a father, who, according to the poet's <sup>f</sup> Nuncupative Will, never paid him the promised marriage portion of a thousand pounds, and to a mother, who, according to Wood, had encouraged the daughter in her perverseness; we cannot but accede to Mr. Hayley's conclusion, that the records of private life exhibit not a more magnanimous example of forgiveness and beneficence. They are supposed to have left him soon after the death of his father, who ended a long life in 1647; and whose declining days had been soothed by every attention of a truly affectionate son.

While Milton experienced the mortification of conjugal desertion, and was immersed in elaborate discussions connected with his misfortune, he was not without mental amusement. His leisure hours often passed smoothly away in

<sup>e</sup> See the Note on Lawes's Dedication of *Comus*, vol. v. p. 177.

<sup>f</sup> Subjoined to this account of the Life. In the Notes on the Will Mr. Warton relates several particulars concerning Mr. Powell.



visits to a lady of the most engaging talents and conversation, the daughter of the Earl of Marlborough ; to whom, as to her husband Captain Hobson, a very accomplished gentleman, his company was peculiarly acceptable. His tenth Sonnet, inscribed to this discerning lady, is a grateful acknowledgement of his esteem. His time also had been employed in collecting together his early poems, both English and Latin, for the press. They were first published by Humphrey Moseley, the general publisher of the poets of his day, in 1645 ; who tells us, in his Address to the Reader, that “ the author’s more peculiar excellency in these studies was too well known to conceal his papers, or to keep me from attempting to solicit them from him. Let the event guide itself which way it will, I shall deserve of the age, by bringing into the light as true a birth as the Muses have brought forth since our famous Spencer wrote ; whose poems in these English ones are as rarely imitated, as sweetly excelled.” Moseley was not more discerning than Milton was modest. But modesty was a principal feature in Milton’s character. He affixed only his initials to *Lycidas* : he acknowledged, with hesitation, *Comus*. It is rather surprising, that Mr. Warton should have <sup>s</sup> asserted that, for seventy years after their first

<sup>s</sup> In the Prefaces to both his Editions of the Smaller Poems.



publication, he recollects no mention of these poems in the whole succession of English literature; and that the quantity of an hemistich, quoted from them, is not to be found in the Collections of those who have digested the Beauties or Phrases of the English Poets from 1655 to 1738 inclusively. It is my duty positively to assert that in the edition of Poole's *English Parnassus*, or *Help to English Poesie*, published in 1677, there are <sup>h</sup> few pages in which quotations may not be found from Milton's poetry. In the preface also to Ayres's *Lyrick Poems*, published in 1687, Milton is thus noticed: "If any one quarrel at the oeconomy or structure of these poems, many of them being Sonnets, Canzons, Madrigals, &c. objecting that none of our great men, either Mr. Waller, Mr. Cowley, or Mr. Dryden, whom it was most proper to have followed, have ever stooped to any thing of this sort; I shall very readily acknowledge, that, being sensible of my own weakness and inability of ever attaining to the performance of one thing equal to the worst piece of theirs, it easily dissuaded me from that attempt, and put me on this; which is not without president: For *many eminent persons* have published several things of

<sup>h</sup> And, to the credit of Poole's selection, I may add that the examples are very often taken from *Lycidas*, *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, and the *Ode on the Nativity*.



this nature, and in this method, both Translations and Poems of their own; as the famous Mr. Spencer, Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Richard Fanshawe, *Mr. Milton*, and some few others: The success of all which, in these things, I must needs say, cannot much be boasted of; and though I have little reason, after it, to expect credit from these my slight Miscellanies, yet has it not discouraged me from adventuring on what my genius prompted me to." I may further observe that *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* appear to have sometimes caught the notice of Robert Herrick, in his *Hesperides*, published in 1648; and that both the ease and imagery of these poems are certainly copied, in a few instances, by Andrew Marvell, the intimate friend of Milton. I will cite a proof from his verses, entitled *The Garden*, Poems, ed. 1681. p. 49.

" Fair Quiet, have I found thee here,

" And Innocence, thy sister dear!

" Mistaken long, I sought you then

" In busie companies of men."

That we meet with no notices of these exquisite poems in the days of Cromwell, must be imputed to "the dark and fullen humour of the time." And we may truly apply, to such neglect, the judicious couplet of Milton's<sup>1</sup> happiest imitator:

<sup>1</sup> Cowper. Table-Talk.



“ Verse, in the finest mould of fancy cast,  
“ Was lumber in an age so void of taste.”

In 1647 Milton removed to a smaller house in Holborn, which opened backward into Lincoln's-Inn fields ; and continued to instruct a few scholars. Philips tells us, that “ he is much mistaken, if there was not about this time a design of making him an adjutant-general in Sir William Waller's army. But the new modelling of the army proved an obstruction to the design.” This perhaps may be doubted, when it is considered that Waller was esteemed a leader of the Presbyterians against the designs of the Independents. Milton, in his military capacity, could not have served cordially under a general so disposed.

Till the overthrow of the kingly government in the death of Charles, his pen appears to have been unemployed. It was resumed in order to silence the outcry, raised by the Presbyterians, against the deed of blood ; and to advance the interests of the infant commonwealth. It is entitled, “ *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, proving that it is lawfull, and hath been held so through all ages, for any, who have the power, to call to account a tyrant, or wicked king ; and, after due conviction, to depose, and put him to death ; if the ordinary magistrate have neglected or denied to do it : And that they, who of late



so much blame deposing, are the men that did it themselves, 1649." Milton seems to have been not correct in his charge. He should have added the Papists and Independents, who were banded in firm league against the Church and the King. He remembered however the assistance which was afforded by the Pope, in order to the subversion of both, when he wrote his treatise *Of True Religion* four and twenty years afterwards; of whom he says, "we have shaken off his Babylonish yoke, [who] hath not ceased by his spies and agents, bulls and emissaries, *once to destroy both King and Parliament.*" On this part of English history it cannot be uninteresting to enlarge. I shall first offer an extract from "Foxes and Firebrands; or a Specimen of the danger and harmony of Popery and Separation;" attributed by some to Dr. Nelson, by others to Sir James Ware; of which a second edition was published in 1682. "But that which makes the thing plain, is the discovery which was made to Sir William Boswell by Andreas ab Habnerfield; which was communicated first by Sir William to my Lord of Canterbury, and by him transmitted to the King then at York, Novemb. 1640. The whole is printed by itself, and in <sup>k</sup> Rushworth's Collections; and is too long here to insert; but the principal parts

<sup>k</sup> Hist. Collect. p. 1314.



and matter of the plot was this, That there was a design on foot, by the Papists, against the King and the Archbishop. That, to effect this, the Scottish commotions were raised, and fomented by the Jesuits ; that they exasperated the English Dissenters by the severity used against Pryn, Burton, and Bastwick ; and the Scots, by the fears of Popery upon the imposition of the Common-Prayer book ; that Cuneus or Cou, the Pope's Legate, and Chamberlain a Scot, Chaplain and Almoner to Cardinal Richlieu, were the great negotiators of this conspiracy ; and that the design was to embroil these nations in a civil war. The troubles came on so fast, as may well be supposed, precipitated for fear of a further prosecution of this discovery, that the Archbishop lost his head for refusing a cardinal's hat, and opposing the Scottish Covenanters ; and the King his, because he would not give away the crown, and put down the mitre, by granting toleration, pp. 50, 51." It was one of the threats of the Covenanters, that " the Enemy should be forced either to give Liberty of Conscience to the Catholicks, or put themselves in danger of losing all, p. 48." Other proofs of the<sup>1</sup> combination might be added. The following is too curious, and too well authenticated, to be

<sup>1</sup> See more particularly Kennet's Register, 1728, pp. 539, 540. And Lord Strafforde's Letters, 1739, vol. ii. p. 74.



here omitted. It is from the pen of Dr. Bargrave, whose manuscript I have <sup>m</sup> already noticed; and who, I may add, was particularly acquainted with Holstenius, one of Milton's friends. Being at Rome, he says, "Cardinal Rossetti was shewed to me to take more particular notice of him, because that he had bin almost 3 yeares in England the Popes Nuntio Incognito, as you may finde in the Italian Historian mentioned in the margent.

"An<sup>o</sup>. 1639 There arriued (sayth he) at London, to reside at the Court as a gentleman traueler, sent by Cardinal Barberino, but effectually he was the Popes Nuntio, by name Charles Rossetti, an Earle by birth; whoe had taken vpon him the Church habite of a Prelate; whoe was of a greate spirit, actiue, and prudent; able to vndertake busines of the greatest difficultie. He was valerous of heart, had a learned tongue, was quick in parts, in breif he was such an one, that his fellow could not be fownde in all the Court of Rome. His letters were dated at

Il Conte Bi.  
faccione Delle  
guerre Civili  
D'Inghilterra,  
Edit. 2<sup>a</sup>. 1653.

P. 17.

<sup>m</sup> See before, p. xxviii.



Rome the 16<sup>th</sup>. of Aprill: (and then my Author telleth us a secret that we are not to know, viz.) And because that in England he woare a Secular habit, and tooke vpon him no other name but of Conte Rosssetti, therefore I will allso hide, where I haue occasion to mention him, his ecclesiasticall title of Monsignore, and giue him onely the title of his noble famely. Vpon his comming to Court, and being courteously receiued, all things went well with the Ro: Catholicks; and those Preists, that by law were to be punished with Death, were onely banished. This was the Spring time of the Catholick Religion in that kingdome, which *florished by the sweete fauorable blasts of the Conte Rosssetti!* Vpon this libels went abowt that the King and Archbishop were Popish &c; wherevpon the Archbishop aduised the King to rid his Court of the Roman Ministers, and to renew the rigour of the law. The Conte Rosssetti, hearing of this, wold not hide the Interesse for which he was at London; but,

p. 18.

p. 22.



vpon this occasion, being made more vigorouse of courrage in this time of dainger, thought that now an opportunitie was giuen him *to captiuate the Kings soul*, and to conduct him to the Catholick Fayth! vpon which he broke his minde to a confident Courtier of theirs, whoe yet doubted how to effect it. Rossetti, having bin perswaded by the Queene to write to the Pope for abowt an 100000<sup>lb</sup> sterling to supplie the Kings necessities, His Holiness his answer was, That the Pope was very ready to supply the King so soone as euer he shold declare him selfe a Catholick, the onely auaylable meanes to losen the chaines of the Treasurie of the Castle of S<sup>t</sup> Angelo at Rome. But, for a King that should turne to the bosome of the Church, he would lay hands vpon that Sacred Treasurie, otherwise shut vp and inpenetrable &c.—Where one may reade a greate many Jntreegues abowt the lending of this mony, and how resolutely the King withstood their attempts, and how Rossetti assalted

p. 31.

p. 32, 33.



## SOME ACCOUNT OF

p. 34.

the two Archbishops to returne to the Roman Fayth. And then we haue mention of Rossetti's letter to the King to perswade him to turn Papist. But he finding His

p. 35.

Ma:<sup>tie</sup> vnmooveable and firme as a Rock, that strongly resisteth the fury of stormes and tempests, hauing his Faith fixed and fastned to a more sure foundation; this Latent Nuntio gaue ouer his fruitless Designe. Finding (saith my Author) that *he gaue light vnto the blinde, that he spake to one that was deaft, and, as the prouerb bath it, wold with water wash a blackmore white*, the (Latent) Nuntio forsooke him; and stole owt of England (for feare of the Parliament that sented him) by the help of Sig<sup>r</sup>. Giustiniano the Venetian Imbassador, and at his comeing to Rome *fu decorato della Porpora Vaticana*.

p. 44.

“ Though he was forced to be gonn, yet the effects of his Nuntiature lasted all the Ciuill Warr, especially amongst the Irish Rebels. To disprooue the calomny that was rayfed upon the King



(probably both by Papist and Presbyterians) he used all the means he could to shew that he was a cordiall Protestant, as is seene by his mony then coyned. So in the feuerall Speeches that he made at the head of his Army, one of them, sayth my Author, hath this passage — ‘ If I tooke a wife of an other Religion being of the Roman Faith, it was with a Univerfall Consent : If the Lord Rossetti came to my Court, I used him courteously, as a noble man and a strainger, as it is fitt for Princes to doe, and yet vpon onely suspection, and not guilt of any wrong to England, I sent him away.’—My Author in another place, speaking of the death of Archbishop Laud on the Scaffold, by way of scoffe sayth—*It had bin better for him to haue turned Catholick, and to haue gonn to Rome, as he had binn aduised, by the prudent counsell of the Popes zelous Nuntio, Rosetti, now a Cardinall !* And, speaking of our Kings death, he hath this pas-

p. 80.

p. 124.

p. 177.



sage—*His death was foretould (so long agoe as when he was Prince of Wales) when he was in Spaine, where he, going to visit a holy Nunne, whoe was much esteemed for her sanctety; shee foretold him, that, if he did not hearken to the inspirations of that light which his gardian Angell shold instruct him in, he shold dye a miserable death, and ruine all his progeny! This ANGELL was Cardinal ROSSETTI, whoe by his frequent inspirations, not internall, but to the eare and the eye, by the voice and by writings, by his eloquent and angelicall suggestions, indeavoured his conuersion to the Catholick Faith! Card: Rossetti an Angel in practice! Greate Minister of the Pope, and an Angel by his office, as being a Nuntio, or Messenger; a zealous Nuntio! Whence it is no maruell, if what the holy Nunne foretold had its effect!*

“Card: Barberino at Rome; This Man his Agent *here*; Card: Mazarino in France; And Gio: Rinuccini Archbishop of Firmo in Italy, and the Popes Nuntio in



Ireland; were the Popish Ecclesiasticks, that by the helpe of the Jesuites, in all probabiley, were the men that ruined the King and Kingdome vnder the new name and Cheate of INDEPENDENT; I being tould beyond Sea by Muncks and Fryars that I might heare Mass where I wold among the *Independents*; that Word signefying onely *Independent as to the Church of England, but Dependent as to the Church of Rome*; and so our warr was a warr of Religion to bring in Popery, and the King was a true martyr (that died for his Religion) in reuenge for the death of the Queene of Scotts, his grandmother."

This acute traveller relates also that he was at Rome, on his fourth visit to that city, when Charles the second was restored; which event, he says, "to my knowledge, was to the great greife of the Triple Crowne and College of Cardinals, who thought to have binn Masters of England." In another page he cites the Italian author, already mentioned, to shew that "Charles the first suspected Mazzarino and the Imbassador of France to have had a hand in his troubles."



From these communications, which the subject of Milton's book induced me to make, I pass on to notice his next publication in 1649; which was "*Observations on the Articles of Peace* between James Earl of Ormond, for King Charles I. on the one hand, and the Irish Papists and Rebels on the other, &c. And *Animadversions on the Scotch Presbytery* at Belfast." The new order of things seemed to be threatened by the desertion of the Scotch Presbyterians to the standard of Ormond; and he made these remarks to obviate the danger. He next entered upon his *History of England*; of which he had written four books, when, without expectancy or solicitation of preferment, he was invited by the Council of State to be *Latin* Secretary; as they had determined neither to write to others abroad, nor to receive any answers, except in that language, which was common to them all. Their choice could not have fallen upon a more perfect master of Latinity. Dr. Newton wishes that succeeding princes had followed this example of Latin correspondence; because, "in the opinion of very wise men, the universality of the French language will make way for the universality of the French monarchy." It may be added, that Milton himself has countenanced the opinion: "Then began the English to lay aside their own ancient customs, and in many



things to imitate French manners ; the great peers to speak French in their houses, in French to write their bills and letters, as a great piece of gentility, ashamed of their own : *a presage of their subjection shortly to that people, whose fashions and language they affected so slavishly* \*.” That monarchy, whose universality the general adoption of her language had been expected to promote, has been itself overthrown. To the wider extension of those forms of government, which have succeeded in that country, the affectation of her fashions and manners perhaps, rather than the usage of her language, may be considered as subservient. But Britain has stood, and may it stand to the last period of time, “ unshaken, unseduced,” by such degrading imitations in a few faithless children. That innocence, and modesty, and tenderness of heart, by which her daughters have ever been distinguished ; and that well-principled conduct, the true spirit of liberty and real love of religion, for which her sons have been renowned ; will never, let us hope, fall victims to the designs of a pretended philosophy, which confounds the distinctions of right and wrong ; to

——— “ those new-fangled toys, and trimming flight  
 “ Which takes our late fantasticks with delight.” †

\* Hist. of England, B. vi. edit. 1698. p. 111.

† From Milton's masterly Verses *At a Vacation Exercise in the*



About this time the King's impressive book, entitled "Eicon Basiliké, or the Portraiture of his Sacred Majesty in his Solitudes and Sufferings," having been published; Milton was ordered to prepare an answer to it. He accordingly printed, by authority, in 1649, his "Eiconolastes," or *the image-breaker*; the purport of the King's book being, in his opinion, <sup>p</sup> "to catch the worthless approbation of an inconstant, irrational, and *image-doting* rabble." Milton's work has been translated into French; and two replies to it, one in 1651, the other in 1692 on its being reprinted at Amsterdam, have been published. It has been asserted, but not proved, that Milton together with Bradshaw prevailed upon the printer to interpolate a prayer, taken from Sidney's *Arcadia*, in some editions of the King's book. Dr. Newton candidly observes, "I cannot but hope and believe, that Milton had a soul above being guilty of so mean an action to serve so mean a purpose; and there is as little reason for fixing it upon him, as he had to traduce the King for profaning the duty of prayer 'with the polluted trash of romances.' For there are not many finer prayers in the best books of devotion; and the King might as law-

*College*, addressed to the corrupters his Native Language. See the Notes on ver. 18 of this poem, vol. vi. pp. 70, 71.

<sup>p</sup> Eiconolastes, at the end.



fully borrow and apply it to his own occasions, as the Apostle might make quotations from heathen poems and plays: And it became Milton the least of all men to bring such an accusation against the King, as he was himself particularly fond of reading romances, and has made use of them in some of the best and latest of his writings." Milton's supposed imposture has been also discredited by Dr. Birch. <sup>1</sup>

Having thus distinguished himself as the advocate of republicanism, the Members of the English council naturally appointed him to vindicate their cause against the attack of no mean opponent. King Charles the second, being now protected in Holland, had employed Salmasius, a learned Frenchman, professor of Polite Learning at Leyden, to write a defence of his late father, and of monarchy. Salmasius, Dr. Johnson observes, "was a man of skill in languages, knowledge of antiquity, and sagacity of emendatory criticism, almost exceeding all hope of human attainment; and having, by excessive praises, been confirmed in great confidence of himself, though he probably had not much considered the principles of society or the rights of government, undertook the employment without distrust of his own qualifications; and, as his expedition in writing was wonderful, in 1649 published *De-*

<sup>1</sup> See the Inquiry into the Orig. of Par. Loft, p. 273.



*defensio Regia.*” It is certainly remarkable that Salmasius, the pensioner to a republick, should write a vindication of monarchy. The States indeed ordered it to be suppressed. Before he had proceeded in his work, he was thus cautioned by his friend Sarravius : “ Periculosæ plenum opus aleæ aggredieris, Defensionem dico nuper occisi Britanniarum Regis ; maximè cum vestri Ordines mediam viam fecent. Laudo tamen animi tui generosum propositum, quo nefandum scelus apertè damnare sustines. Hac tamen te cautione uti opus est, ne ita Majestatem Regiam extollas, ut erga subditos amorem videantur illis gratis largiri.” From the correspondence of this learned Frenchman with Salmasius we learn some curious particulars respecting the work, which occasioned Milton’s elaborate answer. Sarravius advised him to read the king’s book, as subservient to his purpose ; a book, he says, which he had read with the highest admiration : “ adeò in ea [icone] plena omnia bonitatis erga subditos eximiæ, et in Deum pietatis. Ex eo libro potueris non pauca depromere Apologetico tuo firmando.” After the *Defensio Regia* had been published, he informs him of the blame attached to him for not having

<sup>r</sup> M. Gudii, et C. Sarravii, Epistolæ, Ultrajecti, 1697. Sarrav. Ep. cxcviii. p. 203.

<sup>s</sup> Ibid. Ep. ccv. p. 210.



sent a copy to the widowed queen of Charles ;  
 \* *who, though poor, would yet have paid the bearer.* Sarravius informs him also of <sup>u</sup> reported antagonists, long before Milton appeared against him. Milton indeed commenced hostile operation immediately on the publication of Salmasius's defence. But the various interruptions, which he mentions in the eloquent Preface to his *Defensio Populi*, prevented his publick display of opposition till the beginning of the year 1651.

Hobbes is said to have declared himself unable to decide whose language was best, or whose arguments were worst. In Dr. Johnson's opinion, Milton's periods were smoother, neater, and more pointed ; but he delights himself with teasing his adversary, as much as with confuting him. Milton's book was burnt at Paris, and at Toulouse. But this procured it more readers. From a letter of Nicholas Heinsius to Isaac Vossius it appears to have been translated into Dutch, and to have been expected also in a French dress. Into our own language it was translated, at the close of the seventeenth century, by Mr. Washington of the Temple. Salmasius's book attracted much

\* Ibid. Ep. ccxxiii. p. 223. " Vidi nobilem Anglum expostulantem, quòd omiseris unum exemplum mittere ad defuncti Caroli viduam, quæ hîc [Paris.] degit ; *Quamvis enim, inquiebat, sit in re minimè lautâ, tamen potuisse solvere pretium tabellarii, quod illud attulisset.*"

<sup>u</sup> Ibid. Ep. ccxxxvii. p. 235.



less notice. It has appeared indeed in different forms, both Latin and French; and, as it should seem from the correspondence of Sarravius, <sup>x</sup> in some editions with slight variations. Salmasius afterwards endeavoured to defend his cause, according to the testimony of Isaac Vossius, by a most unjustifiable attack upon the moral character of Milton while he resided in Italy: Both combatants indeed had betrayed too much personal malevolence: But it is to the disgrace of Salmasius that he should so far have forgotten himself as to confound the champion with the assassin. Milton, for his performance, was complimented <sup>y</sup> at home by the visits or invitations of all the foreign ministers at London, as well as by the more solid approbation of his employers in the present of a thousand pounds; and by encomiastick letters from the most celebrated scholars abroad. Christina, queen of Sweden, is said to have treated the *defender of monarchy* with coldness, after having read the *Defence of the People*: And Dr. Newton adds that Salmasius was dismissed, from her Court, with contempt.

<sup>x</sup> Ibid. Ep. ccxxxvi. p. 234.

<sup>y</sup> He perhaps lost the friendship of others on this occasion. Certain it seems that the amiable and learned Earl of Bridgewater, who had performed the part of the First Brother in his *Comus*, now disdained his acquaintance. On the title-page of the *Defensio*, now in the Duke of Bridgewater's possession, this Nobleman has written, "*Liber igne, Author furcâ, dignissimi.*"



He was dismissed, or rather retired, not with degradation, but, as Dr. Johnson observes, with a train of attendance scarcely less than regal. Probably for the mean pleasure of tormenting Salmasius, this capricious monarch had commended Milton. After Salmasius's death, she assured his widow, by letter, that she had esteemed him as a father, and would never cease to honour his memory. Salmasius died in 1653 at Spa; having prepared a reply to Milton, without books, and by the sole help of memory<sup>z</sup>; which, left as it was unfinished, was published by his son, with a dedication to the King, at the Restoration: It is more distinguished for abuse than argument.

It must not be omitted that Salmasius, in his *Defensio Regia*, had pressed hard upon his adversary in a particular point; and that Milton, to maintain the point, was tempted to put on the fragile armour of untruth. A learned prelate, in modern times, has detected this diminished brightness of Milton. “<sup>a</sup> When Salmasius upbraided Cromwell's faction with the tenets of the Brownists, the chosen advocate of that execrable faction [Milton] replied, that, if *they* were Brownists, Luther, Calvin, Bucer, Zwinglius, and all the most celebrated theologians of the

<sup>z</sup> Vita et Epist. Cl. Salmasii, ab. Ant. Clementio, 1656. Vit. p. liii.

<sup>a</sup> Appendix to Bishop Watson's Sermon before the House of Lords, Jan. 30, 1793, p. 38.



Orthodox, must be included in the same reproach. A groffer falsehood, as far as Luther, Calvin, and many others are concerned, never fell from the unprincipled pen of a party-writer. However sedition might be a part of the puritanick Creed, the general faith of the Reformers rejects the infamous Alliance."

That the death of Salmasius was hastened by the neglect which he is said to have experienced, on the appearance of Milton's book, is by no means clear. His biographer, Clementius, gives a distinct account of the disorder which terminated his days, and to which he had long been subject, the gout. The supposed credit of destroying a literary antagonist may indeed be deducted, without injury, from the achievements of Milton.

The first reply to Milton's *Defensio Populi* was published in the same year, and was entitled "Apologia pro Rege et Populo Anglicano, contra Johannis Polypragmatici (alias Miltoni Angli) Defensionem destructivam Regis et Populi." The author was unknown. Milton directed his younger nephew to answer it, who possibly prepared the first draught of a reply; which, before it went to the press, was so carefully examined and corrected by Milton, that it may be considered almost as his own performance, although denominated "Johannis Philippi Angli Responso ad Apologiam anonymi cujusdam tene-



brionis pro Rege et Populo Anglicano infantissimam." This piece appeared in 1652. Bishop Bramhall is the ideal enemy with whom Philips here encounters. Of so contemptible and barbarous a composition as the *Apologia* that learned prelate could not be the author. But it was thought subservient perhaps to the consequence of the cause, to exhibit its nameless opponent as a man of the most distinguished talents. In this year Sir Robert Filmer's *Animadversions* on Milton's *Defensio*, Hobbes's *Leviathan*, and Grotius's *De Jure Belli*, were likewise published. They were unnoticed by Milton. In 1652 also, the following publication appeared in Dublin against him: "Carolus I. à securi et calamo *Miltoni* vindicatus." And in 1653, at Leyden, "Caspari Ziegleri Lipsiensis circa Regicidium Anglorum exercitationes. Accedit Jacobi Schalleri Dissertatio ad loca quædam *Miltoni*."

Milton, when he was first made Latin Secretary, removed from his house in Holborn to lodgings in the vicinity of Whitehall; and was at length fixed, with his family, in apartments prepared for him in Scotland-yard; where he lost an infant son. His health being impaired, he chose, however, in 1652, a more airy situation; and occupied a garden-house in Petty-France, Westminster, which opened into St. James's Park; in which he continued till within



a few weeks of the Restoration. In this abode he had not been settled long, before he lost his first wife in child-bed; who left him three daughters. He afterwards married Catherine, the daughter of Captain Woodcock of Hackney. She also died in child-bed of a daughter, and within a year after their marriage. Milton honoured her memory, and soothed his own sensibility, in a tender Sonnet.

He had become utterly blind two or three years before his second marriage; having lost the use of his left eye in 1651, and, according to his biographers, that of the other in 1654. But I am inclined to suppose, that he experienced the misfortune of total darkness before the latter date. For, in Thurloe's *State-Papers*, there is the following passage in a letter from the Hague, dated 20. Junii, 1653. “<sup>b</sup> Vous avez en Angleterre *un aveugle* nommé Milton, qui a le renom d' avoir bien escrit.”

His enemies meanly triumphed in his blindness; and imputed it as a judgement from heaven upon him for writing against the King. But his eyes had been gradually failing long before, owing to the midnight studies of his youth. He had been cautioned by his physicians, while he was writing his *Defence of the People*, to desist from the task, if he valued the preservation of

<sup>b</sup> Vol. i. p. 281.



his sight ; but he was undismayed by thier opinion, and did not hesitate to prefer what he thought his duty to his eyes ; and, after their orbs were quenched, he nobly tells us, that, while he despised the resentment of those who rebuked his darknes, he did not want the charity to forgive them. At the desire of his friend Leonard Philaras, a celebrated Athenian, and ambassadour from the Duke of Parma at Paris, (who had written an encomium of his *Defence*,) he sent him a particular account of his calamity ; not without an expectation, which alas ! was never gratified, of deriving benefit from the opinion of Thevenot, a physician particularly distinguished as an oculist. Milton's curious and admirable letter, which is the fifteenth of his Latin epistles, has been translated by Mr. Richardson and Mr. Hayley. In the more attractive language of the latter, I submit it to the reader. “ As I have cherished from my childhood (if ever mortal did) a reverential fondness for the Grecian name, and for your native Athens in particular, so have I continually persuaded myself, that at some period I should receive from that city a very signal return for my benevolent regard : nor has the ancient genius of your most noble country failed to realize my presage ; he has given me in you an Attick brother, and one most tenderly attached to me. Though I was



known to you only by my writings, and though your residence was far distant from mine, you first addressed me in the most engaging terms by letter ; and afterwards coming unexpectedly to London, and visiting the stranger, who had no eyes to see you, continued your kindness to me under that calamity, which can render me a more eligible friend to no one, and to many, perhaps, may make me an object of disregard.

“ Since, therefore, you request me not to reject all hope of recovering my sight, as you have an intimate friend at Paris, in Thevenot the physician, who excels particularly in relieving ocular complaints, and whom you wish to consult concerning my eyes, after receiving from me such an account as may enable him to understand the source and symptoms of my disorder, I will certainly follow your kind suggestion, that I may not appear to reject assistance thus offered me, perhaps providentially.

“ It is about ten years, I think, since I perceived my sight to grow weak and dim, finding at the same time my intestines afflicted with flatulence and oppression.

“ Even in the morning, if I began as usual to read, my eyes immediately suffered pain, and seemed to shrink from reading, but, after some moderate bodily exercise, were refreshed ; whenever I looked at a candle I saw a sort of iris



around it. Not long afterwards, on the left side of my left eye (which began to fail some years before the other) a darkneſs aroſe, that hid from me all things on that ſide ;—if I chanced to cloſe my right eye, whatever was before me ſeemed diminiſhed.—In the laſt three years, as my remaining eye failed by degrees ſome months before my ſight was utterly gone, all things that I could diſcern, though I moved not myſelf, appeared to fluctuate, now to the right, now to the left. Obſtinate vapours ſeem to have ſettled all over my forehead and my temples, overwhelming my eyes with a ſort of ſleepy heavineſs, eſpecially after food, till the evening ; ſo that I frequently recollect the condition of the prophet Phineus in the Argonauticks ;

— Him vapours dark

‘ Envelop’d, and the earth appeared to roll

‘ Beneath him, ſinking in a lifeleſs trance.’

But I ſhould not omit to ſay, that while I had ſome little ſight remaining, as ſoon as I went to bed, and reclined on either ſide, a copious light uſed to dart from my cloſed eyes ; then, as my ſight grew daily leſs, darker colours ſeemed to burſt forth with vehemence, and a kind of internal noiſe ; but now, as if every thing lucid were extinguished, blackneſs, either abſolute or chequered, and interwoven as it were with aſh-colour, is accuſtomed to pour itſelf on my eyes ;



yet the darkness perpetually before them, as well during the night as in the day, seems always approaching rather to white than to black, admitting, as the eye rolls, a minute portion of light as through a crevice.

“ Though from your physician such a portion of hope also may arise, yet, as under an evil that admits no cure, I regulate and tranquillize my mind, often reflecting, that since the days of darkness allotted to each, as the wise man reminds us, are many, hitherto my darkness, by the singular mercy of God, with the aid of study, leisure, and the kind conversation of my friends, is much less oppressive than the deadly darkness to which he alludes. For if, as it is written, man lives not by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God, why should not a man acquiesce even in this? not thinking that he can derive light from his eyes alone, but esteeming himself sufficiently enlightened by the conduct or providence of God.

“ As long, therefore, as he looks forward, and provides for me as he does, and leads me backward and forward by the hand, as it were, through my whole life, shall I not cheerfully bid my eyes keep holiday, since such appears to be his pleasure? But whatever may be the event of your kindness, my dear Philaras, with a mind not less resolute and firm than if I were Lynceus



himself, I bid you farewell. *Westminster*, Sept. 28, 1654."

Thus "content, though blind," he continued to exercise his abilities with his accustomed animation. For, as Dr. Johnson remarks, his mind was too eager to be diverted, and too strong to be subdued. An assistant, however, was allowed him in his office of Latin Secretary; and his salary was continued. In 1654, he published his "*Defensio Secunda pro Populo Anglicano, contra infamem libellum anonymum, cui titulus, Regii sanguinis clamor ad coelum adversus parricidas Anglicanos.*" Of the book, which excited this reply, the author was Peter du Moulin the younger, afterwards prebendary of Canterbury. He had transmitted his papers to Salmasius, by whom they were entrusted, for publication, to Alexander Morus. Du Moulin had been already in too much danger not to know the necessity of concealment. In the late King's service he had written his "*Apologie de la Religion Reformée, et de la Monarchie, et de l'Eglise d'Angleterre, &c.*" which, he has himself recorded, "was begun at York, during the siege, in a roome whose chimney was beaten downe by the cannon while I was at my work; and, after the siege

\* From the copy of his book in the Library of Canterbury Cathedral, numbered L. iv. 50.; the first five leaves of which contain a manuscript relation, written with his own hand, of his services in the cause of royalty.



and my expulsion from the rectory at Wheldrake, it was finisht in an underground cellar, *where I lay hid to auoyd warrants that were out against me from Committees to apprehend me and carry me prisoner to Hull.*—Much about the same time I set out my Latin poeme *Ecclesiæ Gemitus* with a long epistle to all Christians in defense of the King and the Church of England; and two yeares after *Clamor regii sanguinis ad coelum.*” Here is a confirmation then, if confirmation were <sup>d</sup> wanting, that Milton had mistaken the publisher for the author. Milton, in his *Second Defence*, has treated Morus with equal severity and ridicule. Morus replied in his *Fides Publica*, into which were interwoven, with the vain hope of blunting the keenness of Milton’s satire, testimonies of character, and a disavowal of the book. Du Moulin was now again in great danger. His dismayed publisher gave his enemies the means of discovering him; but they suffered him to escape, rather than they would publickly convict Milton of his errour. Milton, on being informed that Du Moulin, and not Morus, was the author of the *Clamor*, is said to have replied, “<sup>e</sup> Well! that was all one, he having writt it [his *Second Defence*], it should goe into the world; one of them was as bad as the other.” Morus,

<sup>d</sup> See the Note on the Epigram *In Morum*, vol. vi. p. 262.

<sup>e</sup> Aubrey’s MS.



however, is still the object of his attack in his *Authoris pro se Defensio*, published in 1655, as a reply to the *Fides Publica*. Morus ventured to rejoin in a *Supplementum*, which was soon silenced by a brief *Responsio* from Milton; and the controversy closed.

He now gave himself up to his private studies, and to the duties of his office. As Latin Secretary, he is justly supposed to have written the Protector's Declaration of the reasons for a war with Spain, in 1655. The peculiar elegance of the style bespeaks the author. He had before addressed, in the name of Cromwell, the celebrated Latin verses to Christina, queen of Sweden. For Milton, rather than Marvell, I think, has the fairest pretensions to be their owner <sup>f</sup>.

As Milton is believed <sup>g</sup> to have continued his friendship for Henry Lawes, the musician, throughout the Rebellion, I am led to think that he now often experienced a pleasing relaxation from business and study in listening to the "soft pipe, and smooth-dittied song," of his early acquaintance. Lawes, who was acquainted with the principal poets of his time, and was honoured with many of their productions for the use of his lyre, had now published two *Books of Ayres*;

<sup>f</sup> See the Notes on Par. Reg. B. ii. 481, and on the Verses to Christina, vol. vi. p. 270.

<sup>g</sup> Account of Henry Lawes, vol. v. p. 208.



in the latter of which, dated 1655, is a ballad, which "The Table, with the names of those who were the Authors of the Verses," ascribes to "Mr. I. M. p. 37." The ballad consists of the first and last sextains of a little poem, which had appeared not long before in an edition of Shakspeare's poems; at the end of which is "An Addition of some excellent poems, to those precedent of renowned Shakspeare, *by other Gentlemen*;" but these verses are without any signature, while Milton's epitaph on Shakspeare, in the same volume, is subscribed I. M. It may not perhaps seem improbable, that Milton might formerly have acknowledged to Lawes this production of his earlier days, which yet he had not thought worthy of admission into his collection of poems. The little poem shows at least a remarkable familiarity with Sylvester's *Du Bartas*; a book, in which Milton was <sup>h</sup> assuredly conversant. I submit the verses, with deference, to the determination of the reader.

" *Lavinia walking in a frosty morning.*

" I' the non-age of a winter's day,  
 " Lavinia, glorious as May,  
 " To give the morne an <sup>i</sup> earlier birth,  
 " Paced a mile of crufted earth,

<sup>h</sup> See the Inquiry into the Origin of Par. Lost, p. 289, &c.

<sup>i</sup> In Lawes's copy, "an *easier* birth."



“ \* When each place, by which she came,  
 “ From her veines conceiv’d a flame.  
 “ The amorous plants began to strive,  
 “ Which should first be sensitive;  
 “ Every *hoary-headed twigge*  
 “ *Dropp’d his snowy perriwigge,*  
 “ *And each bough his icy beard;*  
 “ On either side his walkes were heard  
 “ Whispers of decrepit wood,  
 “ Calling to their rootes for blood:  
 “ The gentle soyle did mildely greet  
 “ The welcome kisses of her feete;  
 “ And, to retaine such a treasure,  
 “ Like wax dissolving, took her measure.  
 “ Lavinia stood amaz’d to see  
 “ Things of yearly <sup>1</sup> certaintie  
 “ Thus to rebell against their season;  
 “ And, though a stranger to the reason,  
 “ <sup>m</sup> Back retiring quench’d their heate,  
 “ And Winter <sup>n</sup> tooke his former seate.”

It has been already observed, that Milton was supplied with an assistant in his office of Secretary. In 1657 Andrew Marvell was associated with him in this duty; before which time, Marvell asserts that he “ <sup>o</sup> never had any, not the remotest, relation to publick matters, nor correspondence with the persons then predominant;”

\* In Lawes’s copy, “ *Where every place.*”

<sup>1</sup> In Lawes’s copy, “ *yearly constancie.*”

<sup>m</sup> In Lawes’s copy,

“ *Back returning quench’d the heat.*”

<sup>n</sup> In Lawes’s copy, “ *And Winter kept.*”

• Rehearsall Transpros’d, Sec. Part, p. 127.



but that he then “enter’d into an imployment, for which he was not altogether improper, and which he consider’d to be the most innocent and inoffensive toward his Majesties affairs of any in *that usurped and irregular Government, to which all men were then exposed.* And this he accordingly discharg’d without disobliging any one person; there having been opportunity and endeavours, since his Majesties happy return to have discover’d had it been otherwise.” So manly an avowal cannot but command respect.—Of Marvell’s regard for Milton, the verses, usually prefixed to *Paradise Lost*, are an elegant testimony. In the volume, from which I have made the preceding citation, are several anecdotes of Milton and his friends, not generally known, as Mr. Warton long since observed. This second part of Marvell’s *Rehearsal Transpros’d*, published in 1673, is an attack on Dr. Samuel Parker, well known for his tergiversation with the times; and of whom it was once said that he “*P* had wit enough to colour any thing though never so foule, and impudence enough to affirm any thing though never so false.” When Marvell attacked him with sarcastick and successful raillery, Parker was an antipuritan in the extreme. Marvell thus expresses his honest indignation against Parker for traducing his friend Milton, p. 377. “You

• Preface to “A Caveat to the Cavaliers, 1661.”



do three times at least in your *Reproof*, and in your *Transproser Rebeears'd* well nigh half the book thorow, run upon an author J. M., which does not a little offend me. For why should any other man's reputation suffer in a contest betwixt you and me? But it is because you resolved to suspect that *he* had an hand in my former book, [the first part of *The Rebearfall*, published in 1672,] wherein, whether you deceive yourself or no, you deceive others extreamly. For by chance I had not seen him of two years before; but, after I undertook writing, I did more carefully avoid either visiting or sending to him, lest I should any way involve him in my consequences. And you might have understood, or I am sure your friend, the author of the *Common Places*, could have told you, (he too had a flash at J. M. upon my account,) that, had *he* took you in hand, you would have had cause to repent the occasion, and not escaped so easily as you did under my *Transprosal*.—But because in your 115. p. you are so particular *you know a friend of ours*, &c. intending THAT J. M. and his answer to Salmasius, I think it here seasonable to acquit my promise to you in giving the reader a short trouble concerning my first acquaintance with you. J. M. was, and is, a man of as great learning and sharpness of wit as any man. It was his misfortune, living in a tumult-



tuous time, to be tossed on the wrong side; and he writ, *flagrante bello*, certain dangerous treatises. —At his majesty's happy return, J. M. did partake, as you yourself did, for all your huffing, of his royal clemency, and has ever since expiated himself in a retired silence. It was after that, I well remember it, that, being one day at his house, I there first met you, and accidentally. —Then it was, when you, as I told you, wandered up and down Moorfields, astrologizing upon the duration of his majesty's government, that you frequented J. M. incessantly, and haunted his house day by day. What discourses you there used, he is too generous to remember. But he never having in the least provoked you, for you to insult thus over his old age, to traduce him by your scaramuccios, and in your own person, as a schoolmaster, who was born and hath lived more ingenuously and liberally than yourself; to have done all this, and lay at last my simple book to his charge, without ever taking care to inform yourself better, which you had so easy an opportunity to do:—it is inhumanly and inhospitably done; and will, I hope, be a warning to all others, as it is to me, to avoid (I will not say) such a Judas, but a man that creeps into all companies to jeer, trepan, and betray them." Marvell, however, was mistaken in attributing the *Transproser Rebeears'd* to



Parker; which, as Mr. Warton remarks, was written by R. Leigh, formerly of Queen's College, Oxford, but then a player. It was printed at Oxford in 1673, "*for the Assignes of Hugo Grotius, and Jacob Van Harmine, on the North-side of the Lake-Lemane!*" A more scurrilous or indecent publication has seldom disgraced the press. The contemptible writer ridicules the *Paradise Lost*, because it is written *in blank verse*, p. 30; and for the same reason calls Milton a *schismatick in poetry*, p. 43. He describes the poet as *groping for a beam of light* in that sublime apostrophe, "*Hail, holy Light, &c.*" p. 43. And he reproaches him as a *Latin Secretary and an English Schoolmaster*, p. 128. With the obscenities of this scribbler I will not soil these pages. I must add that the *Reproof* in which Milton is called a *friend of ours*, was certainly written by Parker. But Parker's "friendly voice" was afterwards changed. Neither Milton nor Marvell, however, lived to read the abuse, which Parker bestowed on both of them in his posthumous *Commentarii sui temporis*; of which Mr. Warton has translated the following passage, relating to the pamphleteers against the royal party at Cromwell's accession. "Among these calumniators was a rascal, one Marvell. As he had spent his youth in debauchery, so, from natural petulance, he became the tool of



faction in the quality of satyrift : yet with more fcurrility than wit, and with a mediocrity of talents, but not of ill-nature. Turned out of doors by his father, expelled the univerfity, a vagabond, a ragged and hungry poetafter, kicked and cudgelled in every tavern, he was daily chaftifed for his impudence. At length he was made under-fecretary to Cromwell, by the procuration of Milton, to whom he was a very acceptable character, on account of a fimilar malevolence of difpofition, &c." B. iv. p. 275. This paffage was perhaps written about the year 1680. *Paradife Loft*, Mr. Warton adds, had now been publifhed thirteen years, and its excellencies muft have been fully eftimated and fufficiently known ; yet in fuch terms of contempt, or rather neglect, was its author now defcribed, by a popular writer, certainly a man of learning, and very foon afterwards a bifhop. Parker became indeed a bifhop ; but he was alfo the obtruded prefident of Magdalen College, Oxford, the minion of a popifh king.

From this account refpecting Milton, and his affociate in office, we may return to the employment of the great poet, after the days of controverfy were no more. His time now appears to have been devoted to the accomplifhment of three literary projects ; the hiftory of his country, an epick poem, and a new dictionary of the



Latin tongue. Of this last work the preparations, which he had made long before, and had occasionally continued till his death, were found so discomposed and deficient, as Philips relates, that they could not be fitted for the press. From these preparations, however, perhaps originated the Cambridge Dictionary, published in 1693; the editors of which acknowledge, that “they made three large folio volumes, containing a collection out of all the best and purest Roman authors.” They were probably communicated by Philips, who is supposed to have been the last possessor of these classical accumulations.

In the mean time Milton amused himself with the publication of smaller productions; of a manuscript by Raleigh, entitled *The Cabinet Council*, in 1658; and of two tracts, in the succeeding year; the first relating to the *Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Cases*, the last to *The Means of removing Hirelings out of the Church*. It must here be noticed, as another proof of his studious disposition, that he had collected a variety of State Papers, from the death of the King to the present period, probably with a view to render them subservient to some particular or general history of his times. They were published in 1743 with the following title: “Original Letters and Papers of State, addressed to Oliver Cromwell, concerning the Affairs of Great Bri-



tain. From the year 1649 to 1658. Found among the Political Collections of Mr. John Milton. Now first published from the Originals. By John Nickolls, Jun. Member of the Society of Antiquaries, London." They had been once in the possession of Ellwood. In this collection are two important letters written by Milton's friend, Colonel Overton; and a character, drawn by Captain Bishope, of another of Milton's particular friends, the lord president Bradshaw; harmonizing, in respect to personal qualities, with his own most eloquent eulogy of that regicide. The collection abounds also with choice effusions of fanatick zeal, in addressees to Cromwell and other supporters of what Milton terms <sup>a</sup> *The Good Old Cause!* In a letter to Colonel Overton, p. 161, is the following passage: "Sir, your friends beseech you *to be much in the mount with God*, who is the best counseler, and will ther be seen: This is no time to consult with flesh and blood." Then follows almost immediately an unfortunate anticlimax to such impressive eloquence, compensated instantaneously, however, by the writer's blazing resumption of his favourite subject! "*Sir, there is one Miss Dawson presents her service to you. To-morrow is kept a very solom day among som heer, fasting and praiers; sum devills are no other way cast out!*"

<sup>a</sup> Prose-Works, vol. ii. p. 797. edit. 1698.



Oliver being dead, and Richard being obliged to resign the protectorship, Milton, upon the dissolution of the parliament by the army, wrote *A Letter concerning the ruptures of the Commonwealth*. With a view to prevent the restoration of kingly government, other republican pens were also busily employed. Not to mention the strenuous exertions of Harrington, I have now before me “*Idea Democratica, or A Commonwealth Platform*,” and “*A Model of a Democraticall Government, humbly tendered to consideration by a friend and well-wisher to this Commonwealth*,” both anonymous productions of 1659. They minutely agree with Milton’s *Brief Delineation of a Free Commonwealth*, addressed to Monk in the same year. But “the ship of the Commonwealth” could no longer be kept afloat: The gale of popular opinion was now adverse. Of the usurpation there were few who were not eager to shake off the galling chains. The following lines of Lucretius may be considered as no dissimilar picture of the present period, as well as of the triumphant reign of Cromwell.

“ Ergo regibus occisis subversa jacebat  
 “ Pristina majestas soliorum, et sceptrum superba ;  
 “ Et capitis summi præclarum insigne cruentum

\* See Milton’s *Prose-Works*, vol. ii. p. 789. edit. 1698.

Lib. v. ver. 1135.



- “ Sub pedibus volgi magnum lugebat honorem.  
 “ Nam cupidè conculcatur nimis ante metutum.  
 “ Res itaque ad summam fæcem turbâsque redibat,  
 “ Imperium sibi cùm, ac summatum, quisque petebat.  
 “ Inde magistratum partim docuere creare,  
 “ Jurâque constituère, ut vellent legibus uti :  
 “ Nam genus humanum, defessum vi colere ævum,  
 “ Ex inimiciis languebat ; quo magis ipsum  
 “ Sponte suâ cecidit sub leges, arctâque jura.”

Milton, however, not long before the King's return, published *The ready and easy Way to establish a Free Commonwealth* ; which he hoped might not contain “ the last words of expiring liberty.” The pamphlet gave rise <sup>t</sup> both to a serious, and to a ludicrous, reply. He afterwards published *Brief Notes* upon a Sermon preached in March 1659-60, by Dr. Matthew Griffith, entitled *The Fear of God and the King*. These Notes were immediately answered by L'Estrange in a pamphlet, insultingly denominated *No Blind Guides*.

Perceiving the return of the King to be unavoidable, he was obliged to quit the house which he occupied as Latin Secretary, and in which he had lived eight years with great reputation ; visited by all foreigners of distinction, and by several persons of quality in his own country, particularly by Lady Ranelagh, whose son had been

<sup>t</sup> See the Notes on the 21st Sonnet, vol. v. p. 494, and on the Ode to Rouse, vol. vi. p. 393.



his pupil. It appears, from Aubrey's relation, that several foreigners had been induced to visit England, in order "chiefly to see Oliver Cromwell lord protector, and Mr. John Milton." In the execution of his office Milton had acquired indeed the highest credit. His *State-Letters*, which are published, are justly admired by critics and politicians, and eminently bespeak the vigour and sensibility of his active mind. They are entitled "Literæ Senatûs Anglicani, necnon Cromwelli, &c. nomine ac jussu conscriptæ." They have been translated into English; in which dress they appeared, with his Life prefixed by Philips, in 1694.

Milton at the Restoration withdrew, for a time, to a friend's house in Bartholomew-Close. By this precaution he probably escaped the particular prosecution which was at first directed against him. Mr. Warton was <sup>u</sup> told by Mr. Tyers from good authority, that, when Milton was under prosecution with Goodwin, his friends, to gain time, made a mock-funeral for him; and that when matters were settled in his favour, and the affair was known, the King laughed heartily at the trick. This circumstance has been also related by an historian <sup>x</sup> lately brought to light; who says that Milton "pre-

<sup>u</sup> See his Second Edition of Milton's Smaller Poems, p. 358.

<sup>x</sup> Cunningham's Hist. of Great Britain, vol. i. p. 14.



tended to be dead, and had a publick funeral procession," and that "the King applauded his policy in escaping the punishment of death, by a seasonable shew of dying." His *Eiconoclastes* and *Defensio pro Populo Anglicano* were, however, consigned to the most publick disgrace. It was the resolution of the Commons, on the 16th of June 1660, that his Majesty should be "y humbly moved to call in Milton's two books, and that of John Goodwin, [*The Obstructors of Justice*,] written in justification of the murder of the late King, and order them to be burnt by the common hangman; and that the Attorney-General do proceed against them by indictment or otherwise." Dr. Johnson thinks that Milton was not very diligently pursued. It is certain that he very successfully concealed himself. The Proclamation for apprehending him, and his bold compeer, particularly notices that "z the said John Milton and John Goodwin are so fled, or so obscure themselves, that no endeavours used for their apprehension can take effect, whereby they may be brought to legal tryal, and deservedly receive condign punishment for their treasons and offences." Of the proscribed books several copies were com-

y Journals of the House of Commons.

z See the Proclamation printed at length in Kennet's Register and Chronicle, 1728, p. 189.



mitted to the flames on the 27th of August. Within three days after the burning these offensive publications, he found himself relieved, by the *Act of Indemnity*, from the necessity of concealment. Goodwin was incapacitated, as Dr. Johnson observes, with nineteen more, for any publick trust ; but of Milton there was no exception. He was afterwards, however, in the custody of the Serjeant at arms ; for on Saturday the 15th of December, 1660, it was ordered, by the House of Commons, “<sup>a</sup> that Mr. Milton, now in custody of the Serjeant at arms, attending this House, *be forthwith released, paying his fees.*” And, on Monday the 17th, “a complaint being made that the Serjeant at arms had demanded excessive fees for *the imprisonment* of Mr. Milton ; it was ordered, that it be referred to the Committee for Privileges to examine this business, and to call Mr. Mead the Serjeant before them, and to determine what is fit to be given to the Serjeant for his fees in this case.” Milton is supposed to have had powerful friends both in Council and in Parliament ; as Secretary Morrice, Sir Thomas Clarges, and Andrew Marvell. But the principal instrument in obtaining Milton’s pardon is said to have been Sir William Davenant, who, when he was taken prisoner in 1650, had been saved by Milton’s interest, and

<sup>a</sup> Journals of the House of Commons.



who now, <sup>b</sup> in grateful return for so signal an obligation, interceded for the life of Milton. This story has been related by Richardson upon the authority of Pope, who received it from Betterton, the protégé of Davenant.

Milton, having obtained his pardon, took a house in Holborn near Red-Lion-Fields; but soon removed to Jewen-street, near Aldersgate. Here he married his third wife, Elizabeth Minshull, of a genteel family in Cheshire. She was a relation of Dr. Paget, his particular friend, whom he had requested to choose a proper comfort for him. It may here be observed that his three wives had all been virgins. Indeed he tells us that he entirely agreed “<sup>c</sup> with them who, both in prudence and elegance of spirit, would choose a virgin of mean fortunes, honestly bred, before the wealthiest widow.” Soon after this last marriage, he is said to have been offered the continuance of his employment of Latin Secretary, and to have <sup>d</sup> magnanimously declined it. It was while he lived in Jewen-street, that Ellwood the quaker was recommended to him as a person who, for the advantage of his conver-

<sup>b</sup> Aubrey, in his manuscript Life of Davenant, ascribes his safety, without mention of Milton, to two aldermen of York. See the Hist. Account of the English Stage, Steevens's Shakspeare, edit. 1793. vol. ii. p. 431.

<sup>c</sup> Prose-Works, vol. i. p. 191. ed. 1698.

<sup>d</sup> See the Note <sup>f</sup> to the Nuncupative Will.



sation, would read to him such Latin books as he thought proper ; an employment to which he attended every afternoon, except on Sundays. “ At my first sitting to him,” this ingenuous writer informs us, in his Life of himself, “ observing that I used the English pronunciation, he told me, if I would have the benefit of the Latin tongue, not only to read and understand Latin authors, but to converse with foreigners, either abroad or at home, I must learn the foreign pronunciation ; to this I consenting, he instructed me how to sound the vowels : This change of pronunciation proved a new difficulty to me ; but ‘ labor omnia vincit improbus ;’ and so did I ; which made my reading the more acceptable to my master. He, on the other hand, perceiving with what earnest desire I pursued learning, gave me not only all the encouragement, but all the help, he could ; for, *having a curious ear*, he understood by my tone when I understood what I read, and when I did not ; and accordingly would stop me, examine me, and open the most difficult passages to me.” The kind care bestowed by Milton upon the improvement of this young man was repaid by every mark of personal regard. The courtesy of the preceptor, and the gratitude of the disciple, are indeed alike conspicuous. After several adventures, which were no slight trials of patience, Ellwood found an asylum in the house of an



affluent quaker at Chalfont in Buckinghamshire, whose children he was to instruct. This situation afforded him an opportunity of being serviceable to Milton. For, when the plague began to rage in London in 1665, Ellwood took a house for him at Chalfont St. Giles; to which the poet retired with his family. He had not long before removed from Jewen-street to a house in the Artillery Walk, leading to Bunhill-fields. On his arrival at Chalfont he found that Ellwood, in consequence of a persecution of the quakers, was confined in the gaol of Aylesbury. But, being soon released, this affectionate friend made a visit to him, to welcome him into the country. "After some common discourses," says Ellwood, "had passed between us, he called for a manuscript of his, which, being brought, he delivered to me, bidding me take it home with me, and read it at my leisure, and, when I had so done, return it to him with my judgement thereupon. When I came home, and set myself to read it, I found it was that excellent poem, which he entitled *Paradise Lost*." From this account it appears that *Paradise Lost* was complete in 1665.

Next year, when the city was cleansed, and the danger of infection ceased, he returned to Bunhill-fields, and designed the publication of his great poem. Some biographers have supposed that he began to mould the *Paradise Lost*



into an epick form, soon after he was disengaged from the controversy with Salmasius. Aubrey says, that he began the work about two years before the Restoration. However, considering the difficulties, as Dr. Newton well remarks, “under which the author lay, his uneasiness on account of the publick affairs and his own, his age and infirmities, his not being in circumstances to maintain an amanuensis, but obliged to make use of any hand that came next to write his verses as he made them, it is really wonderful that he should have the spirit to undertake such a work, and much more that he should ever bring it to perfection.” Yet his tuneful voice was

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“ unchang’d  
 “ To hoarse or mute, though fall’n on evil days,  
 “ On evil days though fall’n, and evil tongues;  
 “ In darkness, and with dangers compass’d round,  
 “ And solitude.”——

To Milton indeed the days might now seem evil. But to so pathetick a complaint cold must be the heart of him who can listen without compassion. It reminds us of the musical but melancholy strains, addressed by his favourite Tasso in a Sonnet to Stiglian, whom he salutes as advancing on the road to Helicon:

“ Ivi prende mia cetra ad un cipresso :  
 “ Salutala in mio nome, e dalle avviso,  
 “ *Ch’ io son da gli anni, e da fortuna oppresso.*”

The last of Milton’s familiar Letters in Latin,



addressed to Peter Heimbach, an accomplished German, who is styled counsellor to the elector of Brandenburg, (and who is supposed, by an expression in a former epistle from Milton to him, to have resided with the poet, when he visited England, in the character of a disciple,) relates his consideration on his present circumstances, and his reflection on the days that were gone, in a most interesting manner. With the translation of this letter by his most affectionate and spirited biographer, Mr. Hayley, the reader will be gratified. “ If among so many \* funerals of my countrymen, in a year so full of pestilence and sorrow, you were induced, as you say, by rumour to believe that I also was snatched away, it is not surprising; and if such a rumour prevailed among those of your nation, as it seems to have done, because they were solicitous for my health, it is not unpleasing, for I must esteem it as a proof of their benevolence towards me. But by the graciousness of God, who had prepared for me a safe retreat in the country, I am still alive and well; and I trust not utterly an unprofitable servant, whatever duty in life there yet remains for me to fulfil. That you remember

\* Even at Chalfont, whither he had retired from the danger of infection, infection had appeared. For in the Register of the parish, under the year 1665, two persons are recorded, as I have been obligingly informed by letter from the resident clergyman, to have died of *the sickness*; [so the Plague was denominated;] one of whom is called a stranger, and died at the Manor House.



me, after so long an interval in our correspondence, gratifies me exceedingly, though, by the politeness of your expression, you seem to afford me room to suspect, that you have rather forgotten me, since, as you say, you admire in me so many different virtues wedded together. From so many weddings I should assuredly dread a family too numerous, were it not certain that, in narrow circumstances and under severity of fortune, virtues are most excellently reared, and are most flourishing. Yet one of these said virtues has not very handsomely rewarded me for entertaining her; for that which you call my political virtue, and which I should rather wish you to call my devotion to my country, (enchancing me with her captivating name,) almost, if I may say so, expatriated me. Other virtues, however, join their voices to assure me, that wherever we prosper in rectitude there is our country. In ending my letter, let me obtain from you this favour, that if you find any parts of it incorrectly written, and without stops, you will impute it to the boy who writes for me, who is utterly ignorant of Latin, and to whom I am forced (wretchedly enough) to repeat every single syllable that I dictate. I still rejoice that your merit as an accomplished man, whom I knew as a youth of the highest expectation, has advanced you so far in the honourable favour of your prince. For your prosperity in every other



point you have both my wishes and my hopes.  
Farewell. *London, August 15, 1666.*"

After the poem had been made ready for publication, it is said to have been in danger of being suppressed by the licenser, who imagined that, in the noble <sup>f</sup> simile of the sun in an eclipse, he had discovered treason. The licenser's hesitation is a striking example of Lord Lyttleton's acute remark, that "<sup>g</sup> the politicks of Milton at that time brought his poetry into disgrace: for it is a rule with the English; *they see no good in a man whose politicks they dislike.*" <sup>h</sup> Licensed, however, the poem was; and Milton sold his copy, April 27, 1667, to Samuel Simmons, for an immediate payment of five pounds. But the agreement with the bookseller entitled him to a conditional payment of five pounds more when thirteen hundred copies should be sold of the first edition; of the like sum after the same number of the second edition; and of another five pounds after the same sale of the third. The number of each edition was not to exceed fifteen hundred copies. It first appeared in 1667, in

<sup>f</sup> B. i. 594, &c.

<sup>g</sup> Dialogues of the Dead. Dial. xiv.

<sup>h</sup> Mr. Malone observes, that the poem was entered in the Stationers' Books by Samuel Symons, Aug. 20. 1669. See the Life of Dryden, 1800, vol. i. part i. p. 114. The title-pages of 1667 and 1668, however, bear in front "*Licensed and Entred according to Order.*" I have two copies with the title-page of 1669, in which this notification is omitted.



ten books. In the history of *Paradise Lost*, Dr. Johnson has observed that a relation of minute circumstances will rather gratify than fatigue. Countenanced by such authority, I proceed to state that the poem, in a small quarto form, and plainly but neatly bound, was advertised at the price of <sup>i</sup> three shillings. The titles were varied, in order to circulate the edition, in 1667, 1668, and 1669. Of these there were no less than <sup>k</sup> five. In two years the sale gave the poet a right to his second payment, for which the receipt was signed April 26, 1669. The second edition was not given till 1674; it was printed in small octavo; and, by a judicious division of the seventh and tenth, contained twelve books. He lived not to receive the payment stipulated for this impression. The third edition was published in 1678; and his widow, to whom the copy was then to devolve, agreed with Simmons, the printer, to receive eight pounds for her right, according to her receipt dated December 21, 1680. Simmons had already covenanted to transfer the right, for twenty-five pounds, to Brabazon Aylmer, the bookseller; and Aylmer sold to Jacob Tonson half, August 17, 1683, and the other half, March 24, 1690, at a price considerably advanced.

<sup>i</sup> In Clavel's Catalogue of all the books printed in England, since the fire of London, in 1666 to the end of 1672. Fol. Lond. 1673.

<sup>k</sup> See the list of Editions at the end of the Life.



Of the first edition it has been observed by Dr. Johnson, that “ the call for books was not in Milton’s age what it is at present ;—the nation had been satisfied from 1623 to 1664, that is, forty-one years, with only two editions of the works of Shakspeare, which probably did not together make one thousand copies. The sale of thirteen hundred copies in two years, in opposition to so much recent enmity, and to a style of versification new to all and disgusting to many, was an uncommon example of the prevalence of genius.” This remark will always be read with peculiar gratification, as it exonerates our forefathers from the charge of being inattentive to the glorious blaze of a luminary, before which so many stars “ dim their ineffectual light.” The demand, as Dr. Johnson notices, did not immediately encrease ; because “ many more readers than were supplied at first, the nation did not afford. Only three thousand were sold in eleven years ; for it forced its way without assistance ; its admirers did not dare to publish their opinion ; and the opportunities, now given, of attracting notice by advertisements were then very few. But the reputation and price of the copy still advanced, till the Revolution put an end to the secrecy of love, and *Paradise Lost* broke into open view with sufficient security of kind reception.



“Fancy can hardly forbear to conjecture with what temper Milton surveyed the silent progress of his work, and marked its reputation stealing its way in a kind of subterraneous current through fear and silence. I cannot but conceive him calm and confident, little disappointed, not at all dejected, relying on his own merit with steady consciousness, and waiting, without impatience, the vicissitudes of opinion, and the impartiality of a future generation.”

Milton indeed may be considered as an illustrious example of *patient merit*. But his admirers were not long silent. Witness the spirited verses of Barrow and Marvell, prefixed to the second edition of the poem: Witness also the celebrated hexastich of Dryden, which accompanies the fourth edition; as well as the liberal acknowledgement of his obligations to *Paradise Lost*, made almost immediately after the death of Milton in the preface to his *State of Innocence*: “I cannot, without injury to the deceased author of *Paradise Lost*, but acknowledge, that this poem has received its entire foundation, part of the design and many of the ornaments from him. What I have borrowed will be so easily discerned from my mean productions, that I shall not need to point the reader to the places; and truly I should be sorry, for my own sake, that any one should take the pains to compare them together,



*the original being undoubtedly one of the greatest, most noble, and most sublime poems, which either this age or nation has produced.*”—Among the circumstances of Milton’s posthumous renown may be mentioned, to the no small diversion of the reader, the *curious commendation* contained in the Preface to “Poems in Two Parts ; First, an Interlocutory Discourse concerning the Creation, Fall, and Recovery of Man. Secondly, A Dialogue between Faith and a Doubting Soul. By Samuel Slater. Lond. 1679.” The author of these poems seems to have thought the great bard, not however without some animadversion of his *correcter pen*, to have been worthy his imitation ! “ I was much taken,” he says, “ with *learned Mr. Milton’s cast and fancy* in his book, [the *Paradise Lost*.] Him I have followed much in his method, and have been otherwise beholding to him, how much I leave thee [Gentle Reader !] to judg : but I have used a *more plain and familiar stile*, because I conceive it most proper !” These compositions, the children of preposterous conceit, would have been a valuable addition to the common-place books of Bayes, who also “ *loved to write familiarly* !”—To the fame of Milton an elegant poetical tribute was paid in the succeeding year by a writer, whom I have<sup>1</sup> con-

<sup>1</sup> See the Commendatory Verses on Milton in this volume, p. 9.



jectured to be Francis Cradock, a member of the same club with Milton. The opinion and encouragement of Lord Somers soon afterwards occasioned the handsome folio edition of the *Paradise Lost*, which was published, by <sup>m</sup> subscription, in 1688; to which is prefixed a list of more than five hundred subscribers, among whom are all the most distinguished characters of that period. Atterbury exerted himself with zealous activity in the promotion of this honourable publication. In the prefaces to the “Second Part of Waller’s Poems,” printed in 1690, and to “The Design of part of the book of Ecclesiastes, a poem by W. W.,” printed in 1691, Milton’s rejection of rhyme is judiciously commended. In 1692, another ornamented edition of *Paradise Lost*, in folio, was published; and a third, with the copious and very learned commentary of Patrick Hume, in 1695. These evidences of encreasing celebrity, within thirty years after the first appearance of the poem, I thought too remarkable to overpass; especially as the popularity of *Paradise Lost* has been supposed to be very confined, till the appearance of Addison’s criticism.—Of the anecdote, related by Richardson, respecting the celebrity which the poem has

<sup>m</sup> Dr. Johnson has said, that Dryden’s *Virgil* was the first considerable work published by subscription. But this edition of *Paradise Lost* preceded the English *Virgil* some years.



been supposed to owe to Denham, the accurate investigation of Mr. Malone has detected the improbability. “<sup>n</sup> The elder Richardson,” says this acute and learned writer, “speaking of the tardy reputation of *Paradise Lost*, tells us, (and the tale has been repeated in various Lives of Milton,) that he was informed by Sir George Hungerford, an ancient member of parliament, (many years previous to 1734,) that Sir John Denham came into the House one morning with a sheet of *Paradise Lost* wet from the press, in his hand; and, being asked what it was, he replied, ‘*Part of the noblest poem that ever was written in any language or in any age.*’ However, the book remained unknown till it was produced about *two years afterwards* by Lord Buckhurst on the following occasion. That nobleman, in company with Mr. Fleetwood Shephard, (who frequently told the story to Dr. Tancred Robinson, an eminent physician, and Mr. Richardson’s informer,) looking over some books in Little Britain, met with *Paradise Lost*; and, being surprised with some passages in turning it over, bought it. The bookseller requested his Lordship to speak in its favour, if he liked it; for *the impression lay on his hands as waste paper*. Lord Buckhurst, (whom Richardson inaccurately calls the Earl of Dorset, for he did not succeed

<sup>n</sup> Life of Dryden, 1800, vol. i. part i. p. 112, &c.



to that title till some years afterwards,) having read the poem, sent it to Dryden, who in a short time returned it with this answer: ‘*This man cuts us all out, and the ancients too.*’—Much the same character (adds Mr. Richardson) he gave of it to a north-country gentleman, to whom I mentioned the book, he being a great reader, but not in a right train, coming to town seldom, and keeping little company. Dryden amazed him with speaking loftily of it. ‘Why, Mr. Dryden, says he, (Sir W. L. told me the thing himself,) ’tis not in rhyme.’ ‘No; (replied Dryden,) *nor would I have done my Virgil in rhyme, if I was to begin it again.*’—How Sir John Denham should get into his hands one of the sheets of *Paradise Lost*, while it was working off at the press, it is not very easy to conceive. The proof-sheets of every book, as well as the finished sheets when worked off, previous to publication are subject to the inspection of no person but the author, or the persons to whom he may confide them; and there is no evidence or probability that any intimacy subsisted between Sir John Denham and Milton. Here then is the first difficulty. The next is, that during a great part of the year 1667, when Milton’s poem probably was passing through the press, the knight was disordered in his understanding: But a stronger objection remains behind; for, on examination, it will be found that



Denham, who is said to have thus blazoned *Paradise Lost* in the House of Commons, was never in parliament. Let us, however, wave this objection, and suppose this eulogy to have been pronounced in a full House of Commons in 1667, in which year Milton's great poem according to some of the title-pages first appeared, whilst others have the dates of 1668 and 1669. So little effect had Denham's commendation, that we find in *two years afterwards* almost the whole impression lying on the bookseller's hands as waste-paper: during which time Dryden, a poet himself, living among poets, and personally acquainted with Milton, had never seen it! And to crown all, by the original contract between Milton and Simmons, the printer, dated April 27, 1667, it was stipulated, that, whenever *thirteen hundred* books were sold, he should receive five pounds, in addition to the sum originally paid on the sale of the copy: and this second sum of five pounds *was paid* to him, as appears from the receipt, on the 26th of April, 1669: so that, in two years after the original publication, we find that, instead of almost the whole impression then lying on the bookseller's hands, thirteen hundred out of fifteen hundred copies of this poem had been dispersed. Unless, therefore, almost every species of incongruity and contradiction can authenticate a narrative, this



anecdote must be rejected as wholly unworthy of credit."

Before I quit the subject of the first appearance of *Paradise Lost*, I must notice a communication, made to the publick ° not long since by a gentleman possessing the original edition, of the following lines ; apparently written by a female on two leaves prefixed to the title-page of his copy, and subscribed at the bottom with this singular remark : “ *Dictated by J. M.*” The communicator observes, that the daughter of Milton officiated as his amanuensis ; and that, from the remark already mentioned, there is some reason to attribute the lines to the author of *Paradise Lost*. Different female hands, it may be added, appear in the manuscript of Milton, preserved in Trinity College, Cambridge. However, the bondage of rhyme will probably incline some readers to doubt the authenticity of these lines ; while several striking sentiments and expressions, and the frequent flow of the verses into each other, may perhaps occasion some also to think them genuine, and that the great poet might have chosen, as an amusement, to employ once more the “ jingling sound of like endings.” The subject also had been a favourite theme of Milton. *On Day-Break.*

° In the Gentleman's Magazine for August 1786, p. 698.



“ Welcome, bright chorister, to our hemisphere;  
“ Thy glad approaches tell us Day is near.  
“ See ! how his early dawn creeps o’er yon hill,  
“ And with his grey-ey’d light begins to fill  
“ The silent air, driving far from our sight  
“ The starry regiment of frightened Night;  
“ Whose pale-fac’d regent, Cynthia, paler grows,  
“ To see herself pursued by conquering foes;  
“ Yet daring stays behind, to guard the rear  
“ Of her black armies whither without fear  
“ They may retreat, till her alternate course  
“ Bring her about again with rallied force.  
“ Hark ! how the lion’s terrour loud proclaims  
“ The gladfome tidings of day’s gentle beams,  
“ And, long-kept silence breaking, rudely wakes  
“ The feather’d train, which soon their concert makes,  
“ And with unmeasur’d notes, unnumber’d lays,  
“ Do joyfully salute the lightfome rays.  
“ But hearken yonder, where the louder voice  
“ Of some keen hunter’s horn hath once or twice  
“ Recheated out its blast, which seems to drill  
“ Th’ opposing air, and with its echo fill.  
“ Thither let’s hie ; and see the toilsome hound,  
“ Willing, pursues his labour, till he ’has found  
“ Some hope of what he follows, then with fresht  
“ And pleasing clamour tells it to the rest.  
“ O Thou, who sometimes by most sacred voice  
“ Father of Light wert styl’d ! let my free choice  
“ (Though all my works be evil, seldom right,)  
“ Shun loving darkness rather than the light.  
“ Let thy essential brightness, with quick glance,  
“ Dart through the foggy mist of ignorance  
“ Into the darken’d intellect, and thence  
“ Dispel whatever clouds o’erspread the sense ;  
“ Till, with illumin’d eyes, the mind  
“ All the dark corners in itself can find,



“ And fill them all with radiant light, which may  
“ Convert my gloomy night to sun-shine day.  
“ *Though dark*, O God ! if guarded by thy might  
“ *I see with intellectual eyes* ; the night  
“ To me a noon-tide blaze, illumin’d by  
“ The glorious splendour of thy Majesty !”

After the publication of *Paradise Lost*, Milton resumed his design of giving an history of his native country. But he proceeded only as far as the Norman conquest. Of this history the first printed copies were mutilated ; for the licenser expunged several passages, which, reprobating the pride and superstition of the Monks in the Saxon times, were understood as a concealed satire upon the Bishops in the reign of the second Charles. Milton, however, bestowed a copy of the unlicensed passages on the Earl of Anglesea ; which were published in 1681, with a preface, declaring that they originally belonged to the third book of his history, and which have been since inserted in their proper places. The six books, which Milton executed, appeared in 1670.

In 1671 he <sup>p</sup> published the *Paradise Regained*, and *Samson Agonistes*. Of the former poem Philips has <sup>q</sup> recorded Milton’s opinion ; not his preference of it to *Paradise Lost*, but his mortification to find it censured as infinitely inferiour

<sup>p</sup> At the price, bound, of two shillings and sixpence. Clavel’s Catalogue, 1673.

<sup>q</sup> Life of Milton, 1694, p. xxxix.



to his former epick production. His *pretended preference* has been <sup>r</sup> recommended by an ingenious writer, with other popular tales believed without vouchers, and without probability, to supreme contempt. Uncommon energy of thought, and felicity of composition, as Mr. Hayley observes, are apparent in both the performances of Milton, however different in design, dimension, and effect. And Mr. Dunster, the learned editor of *Paradise Regained* in 1795, has happily advanced the poem from the obscurity, in which it had been too long shrouded; pleading its merits with all the masterly discrimination of an eloquent advocate. Mr. Warton and Mr. Hayley assert, that the poet *planned*, or *began*, it at Chalfont: Mr. Dunster argues, that he probably *finished* it at his temporary residence. “<sup>s</sup> We may suppose,” he says, “that Milton remained at Chalfont till towards the Spring of 1666; as it is said he did not return to London until ‘the sickness was over, and the city was well cleansed, and become safely habitable.’—Ellwood proceeds to inform us, that, ‘when he waited on him afterwards in London, which he seldom failed to do when his occasions led him thither,’ Milton showed him his second poem; and ‘in a pleasant tone,’ (which to me indicates his own full approbation of his work,) said to him, ‘This is

<sup>r</sup> Letters of Literature, 1785, p. 416.

<sup>s</sup> Addition to his edit. of *Par. Regained*.



owing to you, for you put it in my head by the question 'you put to me at Chalfont; which before I had not thought of.' It seems therefore nearly certain, that the *whole of the poem* was composed at Chalfont. As it was conceived with fervour, it was, I doubt not, proceeded in 'with eager thought.' This was the characteristick of Milton in composition, as may be collected from his letter to his friend Deodate, (September 2, 1637,) where he describes his own temper to be marked with an eagerness to finish whatever he had begun; 'meum sic est ingenium, nulla ut mora, nulla quies, nulla ferme illius rei cura, aut cogitatio distineat, quoad pervadam quo feror, et grandem aliquam studiorum meorum quasi periodum conficiam.' *Epist. Familiar. vi.* There is also such a high degree of unity, connection, and integral perfection in the whole of this second poem, as indicates it to have been the *uninterrupted* work of one season; and, as I would suppose, the *exclusive* occupation of his divine genius during his residence in Buckinghamshire. To have composed the whole of the poem in that time, would require him to produce only about ten lines a day; and many parts are given so perfectly *con amore*, that I am confident, upon those occasions, he proceeded *at a very different rate*. That the *Paradise Regained* was not published till

\* See the *Origin of Paradise Regained*, prefixed to the poem in the 4th vol. of this edition.



five years after the time when I suppose it to have been completed, might be the ground on which Mr. Warton considered it as not being then finished: and yet many other reasons might be assigned for its not being printed sooner. *Paradise Lost*, we know, was finished at least two years before it was printed; and it was not till a year after Milton's return to London from Chalfont, that the contract with Samuel Simmons for the copy of it was signed, and the first purchase money of five pounds was paid for it. Milton, we find, received the second five pounds two years after; the stipulated number of copies, to entitle him thereto, being then sold. The author probably did not think of going again to the press with his *second* poem, till he saw the requisite sale of the *first* accomplished. *Paradise Regained* might also wait for the completion of its companion, the *Samson*; a work, which furnishes some internal proofs of its having been composed at different periods. In July, 1670, the two poems were licensed, and were printed the year following. In 1670 was printed his *History of England*: so that Milton was not without his occupations between the time of his return to London, in the Spring 1666, and his procuring the licence for printing his *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* in July 1670. That he might revise and correct his brief epick previous to this, is very possible: but, that it was



composed in its first form at Chalfont, I think, cannot be doubted. Accordingly I regard the little mansion there with no small degree of veneration, as being exclusively the *incunabula* of Milton's *Paradise Regained*. I should approach it as a Tibur or a Tusculum; and should feel myself on classic ground." For "similar reasons the poet's last residence, the house in the Artillery-walk, may appear to his enthusiastick admirers, as Mr. Hayley remarks, consecrated by his genius.

In the *Samson Agonistes* there are so many severe strictures, clearly pointing at the Restoration, and at the subsequent sufferings of Milton's party, that it has been often wondered it should have been sanctioned with an *imprimatur*. A learned antiquary thus endeavours to account for this indulgence in the licenser: "x Hurt by the censures, to which he had subjected himself by his over-refined cavils at *Paradise Lost*, he might be unwilling to renew and encrease the obloquy, by demurring at the appearance of another poem of unquestionable excellence." To his own sufferings also the poet often alludes in this sublime and affecting tragedy. He had before couched his complaint, as well as his unsubdued contempt of regal government, under the concluding sen-

<sup>u</sup> See the Note <sup>n</sup> to the Nuncupative Will.

<sup>x</sup> Denne's Hist. of Lambeth Parish, &c. 1795, p. 344.



tence of his history : “ As the long-suffering of God permits bad men to enjoy prosperous days with the good, so his severity oftentimes exempts not good men from their share in evil times with the bad.”

In 1672, he published his *Artis Logicæ plenior institutio, ad Rami methodum concinnata*. He had, in 1661, given to the publick, for the service of youth, *Accidence commenced Grammar*. These pieces are proofs of that zeal for careful education, which Milton showed throughout his life. To this zeal Dr. Johnson has paid a tribute of applause, not more honourable than just. “ To that multiplicity of attainments, and extent of comprehension, that entitle this great author to our veneration, may be added a kind of humble dignity, which did not disdain the meanest services to literature. The epick poet, the controvertist, the politician, having already descended to accommodate children with a book of rudiments, now, in the last years of his life, composed a book of Logick, for the initiation of students in philosophy.” Of his book of Logick there was a second edition in the following year.

In 1673, his treatise *Of true Religion, Heresie, Schism, Toleration, and what best means may be used against the growth of Popery*, was published. In this discourse there are some passages, which show that Milton had altered his opinion, since his younger days, respecting certain points of



doctrine. That regard for the Holy Writings, which always predominated in his mind, is also particularly observable in it. "Let not," he says, "the countryman, the tradesman, the lawyer, the physician, the statesman, excuse himself by his much business from the studious reading of the Bible." This advice he offers as the best preservative against Popery. His principle of toleration, as Dr. Johnson observes, is agreement in the sufficiency of the Scriptures; and he extends it to all who, whatever their opinions are, profess to derive them from the Sacred Books. In the same year he reprinted his juvenile poems with some additions, and with the *Treatise on Education*.

In 1674, the last year of his laborious life, he published his *Familiar Letters in Latin*, to which he added some *Academical Exercises*. His employment of the press closed for ever in a translation of the <sup>y</sup> *Latin Declaration of the Poles in favour of John the third*, their heroick sovereign. He had now been a long sufferer by the gout; and in July, considering his end to be approaching, he informed his brother Christopher, who was then a bencher in the Inner Temple, that he wished to dictate to him the disposition of his

<sup>y</sup> The Biographical Dictionary, of 1798, calls this piece a translation from the *Dutch*. See vol. 10. p. 465. But the title-page of the performance announces it thus: "Now faithfully translated from the *Latin Copy*."



property. The recent discovery of this Nuncupative Will minutely illustrates the domestick manners of the poet. To this account of his life it is subjoined, entire, with the notes of Mr. Warton. Milton died on <sup>z</sup> Sunday the 8th of November following. His death was so easy, that the time of his expiration was unperceived by the attendants in his room.

He left in manuscript, *A brief History of Moscovia, and of other less-known Countries lying eastward of Russia as far as Cathay*, which was printed in 1682. His manuscript *System of Theology*, and *An Answer to a Libel upon himself*, (which Philips supposes him to have suppressed from a proper contempt of the libeller,) are supposed to have perished. Of the following tract the biographers of Milton have taken no notice: “An Argument, or Debate in Law, of the great Question concerning the Militia; as it is now settled by Ordinance of both the Houses of Par-

<sup>z</sup> Mr. Hayley says, on Sunday the 15th of November. But it appears, by the Register of St. Giles's Cripplegate, that he was buried on the 12th. “L. John Melton, gentleman. Consumption. Chancell. 12. Nov. 1674.” Melton has been altered, in fresher ink, to Milton. L. denotes the liberty of the parish. Mr. Steevens supposed the entry to have been made by the undertaker, who knew nothing more of Milton than that he was dead. Aubrey says, “He was buried at the upper end in St. Gyles Cripple-gate chancell,” and that, when “the two steppes to the Communion Table were rayfed, (Nov. 1681,) his Stone was removed.”



liament. By J. M. London, 1642." 4°. On the title-page of this pamphlet, (now in the possession of the Duke of Bridgewater,) Milton's *elder Brother in Comus*, the second Earl of Bridgewater, has written the name of the poet as the author. At the end of Philips's Life of Milton, with manuscript remarks by Oldys, communicated to me by Mr. Reed, this tract is also noticed among Oldys's additions to the publications of Milton.

The hand of Milton may be often discovered in the publication of his nephew, Edward Philips, entitled "*Theatrum Poetarum Anglicanorum*, or A compleat Collection of the Poets, especially the most eminent, of all ages, &c. Lond. 1675." Kennet, in his Register, <sup>a</sup> records the existence of this work in November, 1660; a circumstance not noticed by Mr. Warton, or by the ingenious editor of Philips's book in 1800. Among many criticisms in this volume, which must be attributed to Milton, those on Shakspeare and Marlow are eminently conspicuous. "<sup>b</sup> Such criticisms," Mr. Warton remarks, "were not common after the national taste had been just corrupted by the false and capricious refinements of the Court of Charles the second." Wood also relates, that Philips's "*Enchiridion Linguae La-*

<sup>a</sup> Register, &c. 1728, p. 321.

<sup>b</sup> Hist. of Eng. Poetry, vol. iii. p. 440.



tinæ," and "Speculum Linguae Latinæ," both published in 1684, were <sup>c</sup> all or mostly taken from the *Latin Thesaurus* written by Milton. Yet it must not be denied, that both Philips and his brother are the authors of various publications; although Dr. Johnson has hastily asserted the brief history of poetry to have been the *only product* of Milton's academy. I may defend the great critick from the censure, however, to which some <sup>d</sup> writers have pronounced him subject, of having affirmed the history to be written in Latin, which is, with a Latin title, written in English. For Wood informs us, that Philips is the author of <sup>e</sup> another work, similar to the *Theatrum Poetarum* already mentioned, and written in the language which Dr. Johnson has related. As Johnson gives no specifick reference to either work, it is more candid to believe him right, than to proclaim him wrong.

<sup>c</sup> Ath. Ox. vol. ii. p. 1118.

<sup>d</sup> The annotator on the Lives of the Poets, edit. 1794, and Mr. Hayley. See also the Gentleman's Magazine, 1789, p. 416.

<sup>e</sup> Entitled "Tractatulus de carmine dramatico poetarum, præsertim in choris tragicis, et veteris Comœdiæ.

"Compendiosa enumeratio poetarum (saltem quorum fama maximè enituit) qui à tempore Dantis Aligerii usque ad hanc ætatem claruerunt; nempe Italorum, Germanorum, Anglorum, &c." These two things, Wood informs us, "were added to the seventeenth edition of Joh. Buchlerus his book, entit. *Sacrarum profanarumque phrasium poeticarum Thesaurus*, &c. 1669." Ath. Ox. ut supr. See a list of the two Philips's publications, *ibid.* and p. 1119.



In the title-page to “Poems on Affairs of State from the time of Oliver Cromwell, to the Abdication of K. James the second, written by the greatest wits of the Age,” and published in 1697, the name of Milton appears. But of Milton not a single line will be found in this collection. The Index indeed mentions “Directions to a Painter, (concerning the Dutch War,) said to be written by Sir John Denham, but believed to be written by Mr. Milton, p. 24.” But, when we turn to the page, we find the poem, worthy only the lowest poetaster, ascribed simply, but doubtless as unjustly, to Denham. Fenton, the editor of *Paradise Lost* in 1725, has printed in a Miscellany which he published, called *The Oxford Miscellany and Cambridge Poems*, a loose epigram under the name of Milton, which had long before appeared among the poems of Lord Rochester. On slender grounds Peck has attributed to Milton the translation of Buchanan’s *Baptistes*, which appeared in 1641 with the following title: “Tyrannical Government anatomiz’d, or, A Discourse concerning evil Counsellors: being the Life and Death of John the Baptist, and presented to the King’s most excellent Majesty, by the author.” Aubrey and Wood, from different motives, would not have forbore to notice so remarkable a production, if it had proceeded from the pen of Milton. This trans-



lation has been <sup>f</sup> supposed, with great probability, to have been intended as a hint, to Charles the first, of the danger he then incurred from the counsels of some about him: and the history of the Baptist, who lost his head by the instigation of Herodias, seems figuratively to glance at the death of Lord Strafforde, and at the influence of the Queen. Peck might have noticed a political pamphlet, <sup>g</sup> published in the following year, “by J. M. :” of which the royal counsellors are the principal theme. From numerous examples I will cite one: “It is the King’s crown that is aimed at, and not onely so, but even the very dethroning of him, and his whole posterity; and in truth so it is, but by *his Majesties evill Counsellors*; who, to magnifie themselves, intend the ruine of the Commonwealth: And is not that in effect a dethroning of his Majesty? All that I shall say is but this: No Governement more blest or happie, *if not abused by the advice of vile and malignant Counsellours*, p. 3.” From the following passage some readers may suspect J. M., the author of this pamphlet, to be Milton: “Freedom, as it is a great mercy, so it ought of temporall blessings, next to our lives, to re-

<sup>f</sup> Biographia Dramatica, vol. ii. p. 387.

<sup>g</sup> Entitled, “A Reply to the Answer (printed by his Majesties command at Oxford) to a printed Booke intituled ‘Observations upon some of his Majesties late Answers and Expresses.’ By J. M. London, printed for M. Walbancke, 1642.” 4<sup>o</sup>.



ceive the greatest estimate; the slavery of the body is the usher to the thralldome of conscience; and if we foolishly surrender up this, the other will not be long after! p. 12.” But, in p. 20, there is sufficient proof, that Milton could not have written it: “What have we to do with Aristocracy, or Democracy? God be blessed, we nor know, nor desire, *any other government than that of Monarchy!*” Peck, therefore, if he had seen this pamphlet, found that, notwithstanding it harmonized in a considerable degree with the subject of the poetical translation, it could not be rendered subservient to his hypothesis. Milton, in the account he gives of himself, appears indeed to have been no friend to translations: “I never could delight in long citations, much less in whole translations; whether it be natural disposition or education in me, or that my mother bore me a speaker of what God made mine own, and not a translator<sup>h</sup>.” He is said to have declined translating Homer. Of literary assistance, afforded by Milton to literary friends, we have no anecdotes. I conjecture, however, that the younger Lawrence, to whom he has addressed an excellent Sonnet, had at least profited by his discourse; for Lawrence has given to the world a treatise on a subject, of which Milton was particularly fond: “Of our Communion and Warre

<sup>h</sup> Prose-Works, vol. i. p. 407, ed. 1698.



with Angels. Printed in 1646." The Sonnet records their friendly visits. Lawrence lived in the neighbourhood of Horton. To Lawrence, as to Milton, the "<sup>i</sup> *Tuscan* song" seems to have been a principal delight. We may reasonably then suppose, that they sometimes conversed upon the remarkable effusions of the <sup>k</sup> *Tuscan* muse, (among other authorities,) on the guardianship of Angels; that Milton perhaps acknowledged the hints he had derived from his beloved poetry; and that the conversation encouraged Lawrence in his design.

The remains of Milton were attended to the grave by "<sup>l</sup> all his learned and great friends in London, not without a friendly concourse of the vulgar." He was buried next his father in the chancel of St. Giles, Cripplegate. In August, 1790, the spot, where his body had been deposited, was opened; and a corpse, hastily supposed to

<sup>i</sup> See the Sonnet, ver. 12, and the note on the Sonnet, vol. vi. p. 492.

<sup>k</sup> The Addresses of the Italian Muse *All' Angelo Custode* are frequent. See "*Rime del M. A. M. Negrifoli*, Vineg. 1552," p. 129, and "*Sonetti di Diversi Accademici Sanesi*, Sien. 1608," pp. 136, 200, 239, &c. I might also add the frequent introduction of a *Spirit* or *Angel* as the annunziatore to the early Italian dramas. See Milton's Verses addressed to Leonora Baroni, vol. vi. p. 250, his prologue to *Comus*, and the same poem throughout.

<sup>l</sup> Toland's *Life of Milton*, prefixed to the edition of Milton's Prose-works, printed (not at Amsterdam as asserted in the title-page, ut) at London, in 1698, fol. p. 46.



be his, was exposed to publick view. A Narrative of the disinterment of the coffin, and of the treatment of the corpse, was published by Philip Neve, Esq. The Narrative was immediately and ably answered in the St. James's Chronicle, in Nine Reasons why it is improbable that the coffin, lately dug up in the Parish Church of St. Giles, Cripplegate, should contain the reliques of Milton. Mr. Neve added a Postscript to his Narrative. But all his labour appears to have been employed in an imaginary cause. The late Mr. Steevens, who particularly lamented the indignity which the nominal ashes of the poet sustained, has intimated in his <sup>m</sup> manuscript remarks on this Narrative and Postscript, that the disinterred corpse was supposed to be that of a *female*, and that the minutest examination of the fragments could not disprove, if it did not confirm, the supposition. Mr. Lofft, noticing the burial of the poet in St. Giles's church, has eloquently censured " <sup>n</sup> the sordid mischief committed in it, and the market made of the eagerness with which curiosity or admiration prompted persons to possess themselves of his supposed remains, which, however, there is reason to believe, far from being Milton's, were the

<sup>m</sup> Now in the possession of James Bindley, Esq; by whom I have been favoured with the perusal of them.

<sup>n</sup> Preface to his edition of the first book of *Paradise Lost*, 1792, p. xxx.



bones of a person *not of the same age or sex*. It were to be wished that neither superstition, affectation, idle curiosity, or avarice, were so frequently invading the silence of the grave. Far from honouring the illustrious dead, it is rather outraging the common condition of humanity, and the last melancholy state in which our present existence terminates. Dust and ashes have no intelligence to give, whether beauty, genius, or virtue, informed the animated clay. A tooth of Homer or Milton will not be distinguished from one of a common mortal; nor a bone of Alexander acquaint us more with his character than one of Bucephalus. Though the dead be unconcerned, the living are neither benefited nor improved: decency is violated, and a kind of instinctive sympathy infringed, which, though it ought not to overpower reason, ought not without it, and to no purpose, to be superseded. But whether the remains of that body which once was Milton's, or those of any other person, were thus exposed and set to sale, death and dissolution have had their empire over these. The spirit of his immortal works survives invulnerable, and must survive. These are his best image, these the reliques which a rational admiration may cherish and revere!"

It has been observed that the original stone, laid on the grave of Milton, was <sup>o</sup> removed not

• See before, p. cxxviii.



many years after his interment. Nor were his remains honoured by any other memorial in Cripplegate church, till the year 1793; when, by the munificence of the late Mr. Whitbread, an animated marble bust, the sculpture of Bacon, under which is a plain tablet, recording the dates of the poet's birth and death, and of his father's decease, was erected in the middle aisle. *To the Author of Paradise Lost* a similar tribute of respect had been paid, in 1737, by Mr. Benson; who procured his bust to be admitted, where once his name had been deemed a profanation, into Westminster Abbey. And the reception of the monument into this venerable edifice became immediately the theme of the muses <sup>P</sup>.

Milton, in his youth, is said to have been extremely <sup>Q</sup> handsome. He was called the Lady

<sup>P</sup> See the spirited apology of Dr. George, and the pleasing verses of Mr. Keith, vol. vi. pp. 395, 396.

<sup>Q</sup> The first published portrait of Milton was that by Marshall, prefixed to the edition of the juvenile poems in 1645. With the palpable dissimilitude of this portrait Milton was justly displeased. See the Note *In Effigiei Sculptorem*, vol. vi. p. 295. In the year 1670, there was another plate, by Faithorne, from a drawing in crayons by Faithorne, prefixed to his *History* of Britain, with this legend; "Gul. Faithorne ad vivum delin. et sculpsit. Joannis Miltoni effigies, Ætat. 62. 1670." It is also prefixed to the edition of his *Prose Works* in 1698. It has been observed, that this engraving is not in Faithorne's best manner. The print has been several times copied. By an ingenious young artist a new drawing has been taken from Faithorne's picture, (supposed to be the best likeness extant of the poet, and for which he sat at the



of his College; an appellation which Mr. Hayley

age of sixty-two,) by the kind permission of William Baker, Esq. in whose possession it now is; from which an engraving has been made for this edition of his poetical works. Faithorne's print, as Mr. Warton observes, is copied by W. Dolle, before Milton's *Logick*, 1672. Dolle's print is likewise prefixed to the second edition of *Paradise Lost*. Faithorne was also copied afterwards by Robert White, and next by Vertue. Mr. Warton has given many other particulars of paintings and engravings of Milton.

“ There are four or five original pictures of our author. The first, a half length with a laced ruff, is by Cornelius Jansen, in 1618, when he was only a boy of ten years old. It had belonged to Milton's widow, his third wife, who lived in Cheshire. This was in the possession of Mr. Thomas Hollis, having been purchased at Mr. Charles Stanhope's sale for thirty one guineas, in June, 1760. Lord Harrington wishing to have the lot returned, Mr. Hollis replied, ‘ his lordship's whole estate should not repurchase it.’ It was engraved by J. B. Cipriani, in 1760. Mr. Stanhope bought it of the executors of Milton's widow for twenty guineas. The late Mr. Hollis, when his lodgings in Covent-garden were on fire, walked calmly out of the house with this picture by Jansen in his hand, neglecting to secure any other portable article of value. I presume it is now in the possession of Mr. Brand Hollis. Another, which had also belonged to Milton's widow, is in the possession of the Onslow family. This, which is not at all like Faithorne's crayon-drawing, and by some is suspected not to be a portrait of Milton, has been more than once engraved by Vertue: who in his first plate of it, dated 1731, and in others, makes the age twenty-one. This has been also engraved by Houbraken in 1741, and by Cipriani. The ruff is much in the neat style of painting ruffs, about and before 1628. The picture is handsomer than the engravings. This portrait is mentioned in Aubrey's manuscript *Life of Milton*, 1681, as then belonging to the widow. And he says, ‘ MEM. *Write his name in red letters on his pictures which his widow has, to preserve them.*’ Vertue, in a Letter to Mr. Christian the seal engraver, in the British Museum, about 1720, proposes to ask Prior the poet, whether there had not been a picture of Milton in the late lord



says he could not relish; and I may add that he

Dorset's Collection. The duchess of Portland has [had] a miniature of his head, when young: the face has a stern thoughtfulness, and, to use his own expression, is *severe in youthful beauty*. Before Peck's *New Memoirs of Milton*, printed 1740, is a pretended head of Milton in exquisite mezzotinto, done by the second J. Faber: which is characteristically unlike any other representation of our author I remember to have seen. It is from a painting given to Peck by sir John Meres of Kirkby-Belers in Leicestershire. But Peck himself knew that he was imposing upon the publick. For having asked Vertue whether he thought it a picture of Milton, and Vertue peremptorily answering in the negative, Peck replied, 'I'll have a scraping from it, however; and let posterity settle the difference.' Besides, in this picture the left hand is on a book, lettered *Paradise Lost*. But Peck supposes the age about twenty five, when Milton had never thought of that poem or subject. Peck mentions a head done by Milton himself on board: but it does not appear to be authenticated.

“The Richardsons, and next the Tonsons, [before Mr. Baker,] had the admirable crayon-drawing above-mentioned. About the year 1725, Vertue carried this drawing, with other reputed engravings and paintings of Milton, to Milton's favourite daughter Deborah, a very sensible woman, who died the wife of Abraham Clark a weaver in Spitalfields, in 1727, aged 76. He contrived to have them brought into the room as if by accident, while he was conversing with her. At seeing the drawing, taking no notice of the rest, she suddenly cried out in great surprise, ‘O Lord, that is the picture of my father! How came you by it?’ And, stroking down the hair of her forehead, added, ‘Just so my father wore his hair.’ She was very like Milton. Compare Richardson, *Explan. Notes*, p. xxxvi. This head, by Faithorne, was etched by Richardson the father about 1734, with the addition of a laurel-crown to help the propriety of the motto. It is before the *Explanatory Notes on the Paradise Lost*, by the Richardsons. Lond. 1734. 8vo. The busts prefixed to Milton's *Prose-Works* by Birch 1738, and by Baron 1753, are engraved by Vertue from a bad drawing made by J. Richardson, after an original cast in plaister about fifty. Of this cast Mr. Hollis gave a drawing by



might be less inclined to be pleased with the title,

Cipriani to Speaker Onslow in 1759. It was executed, perhaps on the publication of the *Defensio*, by one Pierce an artist of some note, the same who did the marble bust of sir Christopher Wren in the Bodleian library, or by Abraham Simon. Mr. Hollis bought it of Vertue. It has been remodelled in wax by Goffet. Richardson the father also etched this bust, for *The Poems and Critical Essays* of S. Say, 1745. 4to. But, I believe, this is the same etching that I have mentioned above, to have been made by old Richardson 1734, and which was now lent to Say's editor, 1745, for Say's *Essays*.

“There is, however, another etching of Milton, by Richardson, the younger, before he was blind, and when much younger than fifty, accompanied with six bombast verses. ‘Authentick Homer, &c.’ The verses are subscribed ‘J. R. jun.’ The drawings, as well as engravings, of Milton by Cipriani, are many. There is a drawing of our author by Deacon: it is taken from a proof-impression on wax of a seal by Thomas Simon, Cromwell's chief mint-master, first in the hands of Mr. Yeo, afterwards of Mr. Hollis. This, a profile, has been lately engraved by Ryland. Mr. Hollis had a small steel puncheon of Milton's head, a full front, for a seal or ring, by the same T. Simon, who did many more of Milton's party in the same way. The medal of Milton struck by Tanner, for auditor Benson, is after the old plaister-bust, and Faithorne's crayon-piece, chiefly the latter. So is the marble bust in the Abbey, by Rysbrack, 1737. Scheemaker's marble bust, for Dr. Mead, and bought at his sale by Mr. Duncombe, was professedly and exactly copied from the plaister-bust. Faithorne's is the most common representation of Milton's head. Either that, or the Onslow picture, are the heads in Bentley's, and Tickell's, and Newton's editions. All by Vertue. Milton's daughter Deborah above-mentioned, the daughter of his first wife, and his amanuensis, told Vertue, that “her father was of a fair complexion, a little red in his cheeks, and light brown lank hair.” *Letter to Mr. Christian*, ut sup. MS. Br. Mus.

“Since these imperfect and hasty notices were thrown together, sir Joshua Reynolds has purchased a picture of Milton, for one hundred guineas. It was brought to sir Joshua, 1784, by one



as, at that period, the appearance of effeminacy

Mr. Hunt, a printfeller and picture-dealer, who bought it of a broker; but the broker does not know the person of whom he had it. The portrait is dressed in black, with a band; and the painter's mark and date are 'S. C. 1653.' This is written on the back. 'This picture belonged to Deborah Milton, who was her father's amanuensis: at her death was sold to sir W. Davenant's family. It was painted by Mr. Samuel Cooper, who was painter to Oliver Cromwell, at the time Milton was Latin Secretary to the Protector. The painter and poet were near of the same age; Milton was born in 1608, and died in 1674, and Cooper was born in 1609, and died in 1672, and were companions and friends till death parted them. Several encouragers and lovers of the fine arts at that time wanted this picture; particularly, Lord Dorset, John Somers esquire, sir Robert Howard, Dryden, Atterbury, Dr. Aldrich, and sir John Denham.' Lord Dorset was probably the lucky man; for this seems to be the very picture for which, as I have before observed, Vertue wished Prior to search in Lord Dorset's collection. Sir Joshua Reynolds says, 'The picture is admirably painted, and with such a character of nature, that I am perfectly sure it was a striking likeness. I have now a different idea of the countenance of Milton, which cannot be got from any of the other pictures that I have seen. It is perfectly preserved, which shows that it has been shut up in some drawer; if it had been exposed to the light, the colours would long before this have vanished.' It must be owned, that this miniature of Milton, lately purchased by sir Joshua Reynolds, strongly resembles Vandyke's picture of Selden in the Bodleian library at Oxford: and it is highly probable that Cooper should have done a miniature of Selden as a companion to the heads of other heroes of the commonwealth. For Cooper painted Oliver Cromwell, in the possession of the Frankland family; and another, in profile, at Devonshire house: Richard Cromwell at Strawberry-hill: Secretary Thurloe, belonging to Lord James Cavendish: and Ireton, Cromwell's general, now or late in the collection of Charles Polhill esq. a descendant of Cromwell. The inference, however, might be applied to prove, that this head is



was attacked from the pulpit : “ We live in an age,” says bishop Lake, “ wherein it is hard to say, whether in cloathes *men grow more womannish*, or women more mannish !” Milton had a very fine skin and fresh complexion. His hair was

Cooper’s miniature of Milton. It has been copied by a female artist, in a style of uncommon elegance and accuracy.”

The genuineness of this miniature, as the portrait of Milton, has been both asserted, and denied, with considerable warmth. See the Gentleman’s Magazine for 1791, pp. 399, 603, 806. The disputants are Lord Hailes and Sir Joshua himself. Most connoisseurs are inclined to believe the portrait to be that of Selden. Sir Joshua Reynolds, who died in 1792, makes the following bequest, however, in his Will, to the Rev. William Mason : “ *The miniature of Milton by Cooper.*” See Malone’s Life of Sir J. Reynolds, prefixed to the Works of Sir J. R. vol. i. p. cxviii, 2d edit.

Two miniatures of the poet, and of his mother, were sold, at the sale of the Portland Museum in 1786, for 34l. See Gent. Mag. 1786, p. 527. In 1792 Mr. Elderton submitted to the publick the outlines of a supposed miniature of the poet in his possession. See Gent. Mag. 1792, p. 17. In 1797 a masterly engraving, from an original picture in the possession of Capel Lofft esq. believed also to be that of Milton, was made by G. Quinton. At West Wycombe Manor-house, in Buckinghamshire, there is a fine portrait of Milton, supposed to be an original. See Langley’s Hist. and Antiq. of the Hundred of Desborough, C<sup>o</sup>. of Bucks, 1797, p. 417. I have been indebted to the kindness of John Charnock jun. esq. of Greenwich, for an excellent original painting, affirmed by some to have been a portrait of Milton by Dobson, but conjectured by others to have been a performance of Riley, who lived rather too late to delineate Milton. Some have supposed it may be a head of his brother Christopher. It is, however, remarkable that Mr. Greenlade, a collector of paintings, who resides in Bond-street, London, has a copy of this very painting, which has been called a portrait of the poet.

\* Sermons preached at Wells by bishop Lake, fol. 1629, p. 67.



of a light brown ; and, parted on the foretop, hung down in curls upon his shoulders. His features were regular ; and when turned of forty, he has himself told us, he was generally allowed to have had the appearance of being ten years younger. He has also represented himself as a man of moderate stature, neither too lean nor too corpulent ; and so far endued with strength and spirit, that, as he always wore a sword, he wanted not, while light revisited his eyes, the skill or the courage to use it. His eyes were of a greyish colour ; which, when deprived of sight, did not betray their loss : At first view, and at a small distance, it was difficult to know that he was blind. The testimony of Aubrey respecting the person of Milton is happily expressed : “ His harmonicall and ingeniose soul did lodge in a beautiful and well proportioned body.” Milton’s <sup>s</sup> voice was musically sweet, as his ear was musically correct. Wood describes his deportment to have been affable, and his gait erect and manly, bespeaking courage and undauntedness. Of his figure in his declining days Richardson has left the following sketches. “ <sup>t</sup> An ancient clergyman of Dorsetshire, Dr. Wright, found John Milton in a small chamber hung with rusty green, sitting in an elbow chair, and dressed

<sup>s</sup> Aubrey says that “ he had a delicate tunable voice,” and that “ he pronounced the letter R very hard.”

<sup>t</sup> Life of Milton, 1734, p. iv.



neatly in black, pale but not cadaverous, his hands and fingers gouty and with chalk stones.— He used also to sit in a gray coarse cloth coat, at the door of his house near Bunhill-fields, in warm sunny weather, to enjoy the fresh air; and so, as well as in his room, received the visits of people of distinguished parts as well as quality.”

His domestick habits were those of a sober and temperate student. Of wine, or of any strong liquours, he drank little. In his diet he was rarely influenced by delicacy of choice. He once delighted in walking and using exercise; and appears to have amused himself in botanical pursuits: but, after he was confined by age and blindness, he had a machine to swing in for the preservation of his health. In summer he then rested in bed from nine to four, in winter to five. If, at these hours, he was not disposed to rise, he had a person by his bed-side to read to him. When he first rose, he heard a chapter in the Hebrew Bible, and commonly studied till twelve; then used some exercise for an hour; then dined; afterwards played on the organ or bass-viol, and either sung himself or made his wife sing, who, he said, had a good voice but no ear. It is related that, when educating his nephews, “<sup>u</sup> he had made them *songsters*, and sing from the time they were with him.” No poet, it may be observed,

<sup>u</sup> Aubrey's MS.



has more frequently or more powerfully commended the charms of musick than Milton. He wished perhaps to rival, and he has successfully rivalled, the sweetest descriptions of a favourite bard, whom the melting voice appears to have often enchanted; the tender Petrarch. After his regular indulgence in musical relaxation, he studied till six; then entertained his visitors till eight; then enjoyed a light supper; and, after a pipe of tobacco and a glass of water, retired to bed.

It has been observed by Dr. Newton that all, who had written any accounts of the life of Milton, agreed that he was affable and instructive in conversation, of an equal and cheerful temper; “yet I can easily believe,” says the learned biographer, “that he had a sufficient sense of his own merits, and contempt enough for his adversaries.” Milton acknowledges his own “*honest haughtiness and self-esteem*,” with which, however, he professes to have united a becoming “*modesty* \*.” Aubrey notices that he was “*satirical*.”

His literature was immense. Of the Hebrew, with its two dialects, and of the Greek, Latin, Italian, French, and Spanish languages, he was a master. In Latin, Dr. Johnson observes, his skill was such as places him in the first rank of

\* Prose-Works, vol. i. p. 177. ed. 1698.



writers and criticks. In the Italian he was also particularly skilled. His Sonnets in that language have received the highest commendations from Italian criticks, both of his own and of modern times <sup>y</sup>. If he had written generally in Italian, it has been supposed, by the late lord Orford, that he would have been the most perfect poet in modern languages; for his own strength of thought would have condensed and hardened that speech to a proper degree. The Academy Della Crusca consulted him on the critical niceties of their language. In his early days indeed he had become deeply enamoured of “the two famous renowners of *Beatrice* and *Laura* <sup>z</sup>.” It has been rightly remarked, that he read almost all authors, and improved by all: He relates himself, that his “round of study and reading was ceaseless.”

His favourite book was the Book of God. To Milton, when a child, Revelation opened not her richest stores in vain. To devotional subjects his infant strains were dedicated; and never did “his harp forget” to acknowledge the aids which he derived from the Muse of sacred inspiration. The remark of Gibbon, that <sup>a</sup> the sublime genius of Milton was cramped by the system of our religion, and never appeared to so great an ad-

<sup>y</sup> See also Algarotti's ingenious criticism on his works. *Opere del Conte Algarotti*, Ven. 1794, tom. x. p. 39, &c.

<sup>z</sup> *Prose-Works*, vol. i. p. 177, ed. 1698.

<sup>a</sup> *Essay on the Study of Literature*, 1764, p. 24.



vantage as when he shook it a little off, will be admitted by few. It is a just and admirable observation of Mr. Hayley, that, “if some passionate admirers of antiquity seem to lament the fall of paganism, as fatal to poetry, to painting, and to sculpture, a more liberal and enlightened spirit of criticism may rather believe, what is very possible, I apprehend, to demonstrate, that Christianity can hardly be more favourable to the purity of morals, than it might be rendered to the perfection of these delightful arts. Milton himself may be regarded as an obvious and complete proof, that the position is true as far as poetry is concerned.” The *Messiah* of Klopstock, and particularly the *Calvary* of Cumberland, may be added as fine examples of the connection between true religion and poetry. When modern Republicanism pretends to consider Milton as her auxiliary, let her remember, with shame, the sanctity of manners which his pages breathe, and the Christian lessons which they inculcate. To *him* “fight more detestable” than the object of her hopes could not possibly be presented. The designs of the crafty sensualist, and of the besotted ungrateful atheist, it was *his* constant endeavour, not to promote, but to overthrow. “It must gratify every Christian to reflect,” says Mr. Hayley, “that the man of our country most eminent for energy of mind, for intenseness of ap-



plication, and for frankness and intrepidity in asserting whatever he believed to be the cause of truth, was so confirmedly devoted to Christianity, that he seems to have made the Bible, not only the rule of his conduct, but the prime director of his genius."—Nor should I omit his own manly anticipation of applause: " <sup>b</sup> Hoping that his name might deserve to appear, not among the mercenary crew of false pretenders to learning, but the free and ingenuous sort of such as evidently were born for study, and love learning for itself, not for lucre, or any other end but the service of God and truth, and perhaps that lasting fame and perpetuity of praise which God and good men have consented shall be the reward of those whose published labours advance the good of mankind."

The classical books, in which he is represented to have most delighted, were Homer, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and Euripides. The first he could almost entirely repeat. Of the last he is said to have been a reader, not only with the taste of a poet, but with the <sup>c</sup> minuteness of a Greek critick. His Euripides, in two volumes, Paul Stephens's quarto edition of 1602, with many marginal emendations in his own hand, is now the property of Mr. Cradock of Gumly in Leicestershire. Of these notes some have been

<sup>b</sup> In his *Areopagitica*.

<sup>c</sup> See Warton's 2d edit. of the *Smaller Poems*, p. 568.



adopted by Joshua Barnes, and some have been lately printed by <sup>d</sup> Mr. Jodrell. In the first volume, page the first, is the name of John Milton, with the price of the book at 12s. 6d., and the date of the year 1634. I have to notice the existence of another treasure, bearing also the same date, the price 3s., and the name of John Milton, written by himself on the blank page opposite the title; his copy of Lycophron, with his own marginal observations. Of this remarkable curiosity, hitherto unknown to the publick, I received my information from Mr. Walker, by whom it had been inspected in the library of Lord Charlemont, the present fortunate possessor of it. From Milton himself we learn, that “the divine volumes of Plato and his equall Xenophon” were principal objects of his regard; and that he preferred Sallust to all the Roman historians. Demosthenes has been supposed, by Lord Monboddo and Mr. Hayley, to have been studied by him minutely and successfully. On contemporary authors Milton has bestowed little praise. Dr. Newton notices that he has condescended, more than once, to applaud Selden; but that he seems disposed to censure, rather than commend, the rest. He has extolled however, in his *Areopagitica*, the merits of Lord Brooke, who had lately fallen in the service of the Parliament, and

<sup>d</sup> See Jodrell's Illustrations of Euripides, 1781. pp. 34, 336.



had written a treatise *against the English episcopacy*, and *against the danger of Sects and Schisms*, in terms of superabundant eulogy.

His political principles were those of a thorough republican ; which have been ascribed, by Dr. Johnson, to a native violence of temper, and to a hatred of all whom he was required to obey. The frequent asperity of this eminent biographer towards Milton, has been repeatedly noticed, by Mr. Hayley, with reprehension and regret ; and, in the following instance, with all the eloquence and dignity of sublime instruction. “ There can hardly be any contemplation more painful, than to dwell on the virulent excesses of eminent and good men ; yet the utility of such contemplation may be equal to its pain. What mildness and candour should it not instil into ordinary mortals to observe, that even genius and virtue weaken their title to respect, in proportion as they recede from that evangelical charity, which should influence every man in his judgement of another.

“ The strength and the acuteness of sensation, which partly constitute genius, have a great tendency to produce virulence, if the mind is not perpetually on its guard against that subtle, insinuating, and corrosive passion, hatred against all whose opinions are opposite to our own. Johnson professed, in one of his letters, to love a good hater ; and, in the Latin correspondence of Mil-



ton, there are words that imply a similitude of sentiment ; they both thought there might be a sanctified bitterness, to use an expression of Milton, towards political and religious opponents ; yet surely these two devout men were both wrong, and both in some degree unchristian in this principle. To what singular iniquities of judgment such a principle may lead, we might, perhaps, have had a most striking, and a double proof, had it been possible for these two energetick writers to exhibit alternately a portrait of each other. Milton, adorned with every graceful endowment, highly and holily accomplished as he was, appears, in the dark colouring of Johnson, a most unamiable being ; but could he revisit earth in his mortal character, with a wish to retaliate, what a picture might be drawn, by that sublime and offended genius, of the great moralist, who has treated him with such excess of asperity. The passions are powerful colourists, and marvellous adepts in the art of exaggeration ; but the portraits executed by love (famous as he is for overcharging them) are infinitely more faithful to nature, than gloomy sketches from the heavy hand of hatred ; a passion not to be trusted or indulged even in minds of the highest purity or power ; since hatred, though it may enter the field of contest under the banner of justice, yet generally becomes so blind and out-



rageous, from the heat of contention, as to execute, in the name of virtue, the worst purposes of vice. Hence arises that species of calumny the most to be regretted, the calumny lavished by men of talents and worth on their equals or superiours, whom they have rashly and blindly hated for a difference of opinion. To such hatred the fervid and opposite characters, who gave rise to this observation, were both more inclined, perhaps, by nature and by habit, than Christianity can allow. The freedom of these remarks on two very great, and equally devout, though different writers, may possibly offend the partizans of both: in that case my consolation will be, that I have endeavoured to speak of them with that temperate, though undaunted sincerity, which may satisfy the spirit of each in a purer state of existence."

By controversy, and by the indulgence of early prejudices, Milton was undoubtedly soured. But, if the conceptions of his mind may be taken from his poetry, he will not be thought to have been by nature unamiable. Of Milton, however he might be mistaken in the means, the constant aim and end was liberty. Yet with the love of liberty who will assert his attachment to Cromwell to have been consistent? But he is<sup>c</sup> supposed to have been deceived by the matchless hypocrisy

<sup>c</sup> See the Note on *Par. Lost*, B. iii. 683.



of that usurper ; and, in the uprightness of his mind, not to have suspected the false dissembler as adverse to his own spirit of freedom. Still it may be wondered that he, who so well knew the nature of *true liberty*, which

——— “ always with right reason dwells

“ Twinn’d, and from her hath no dividual being ;”

it may be wondered that he, I say, should not have timely perceived the designs of *the tyrant whom he served*. Influenced by his uprightness, however, he had before offered to Cromwell, with undaunted zeal, a solemn and energetick <sup>f</sup> lesson of conduct. Nor was Milton exactly that friend to the *majesty of the people*, which the *modern illuminators* of the world have imagined. For, to that pretended sovereignty, what greater insult can be offered than the appellations, with which he has distinguished *the people*, of “ a <sup>g</sup> herd confus’d, a miscellaneous rabble !” The well-known expression of <sup>h</sup> Burke must yield to these kindred phrases.

<sup>f</sup> Def. Sec. Prose-Works, vol. iii. p. 109, ed. 1698.

<sup>g</sup> Par. Regained, B. iii. 49.

<sup>h</sup> See the Notes on *Par. Reg.* B. iii. 49. Burke, I may observe, was an ardent admirer of Milton. I learn, from Mr. Walker, that this great orator was a distinguished member of a Literary Club, instituted in Dublin in 1747, in which he sometimes held the secretary’s pen, and sometimes filled the president’s chair ; and that, in the original minutes of this society, his early Miltonick taste is thus recorded. “ Friday, June 5<sup>th</sup>. 1747. Mr. Burke, being ordered to speak the speech of Moloch, receives



The theological sentiments of Milton are said to have been often changed ; from Puritanism to Calvinism ; from Calvinism to an esteem for Arminius ; and finally, from an accordance with Independents<sup>i</sup> and Anabaptists, to a dereliction of every denomination of Protestants. From any heretical peculiarity of opinion he was free. Dr. Newton considers him as a *Quietist*, full of the

*applause for the delivery ; it being in character :* Then the speech was read, and criticised upon ; its many beauties illustrated ; the chief judged to be its conformity with the character of Moloch :

———— ‘ No ; let us rather choose,  
 ‘ Arm’d with Hell-flames and fury, all at once  
 ‘ O’er Heaven’s high towers to force resistless way.’

The words ‘ all at once’ (the metre not considered) seemed, to the whole assembly, to hurt the sentence by stopping the rapidity, and checking the fierceness, of it ; making it too long and tedious. Then was Belial’s speech read, to the great delight of the hearers ; whose opinion was, that Homer only can be compared to Milton, not only for the beauties that shine in every verse, but likewise for the just and lively colours in which each character was drawn ; for that none but Homer, like him, ever supported such spirit and exactness in the speeches of such a contrast and variety of persons.” These notices will not seem tedious ; for they suggest an opinion, that the finest oratory of modern times might owe its origin, and perfection, to the poetry of Milton.

<sup>i</sup> See before, p. lxiii. Petit, in his *Vision of Purgatory*, published in 1685, introduces Milton in conversation with a Provincial of the Jesuits, to whom “ the fanatical rebels of England” are described as “ imps ;” and, “ because Milton was a man of singular eloquence,” the author represents him, as spiritedly expostulating with the Provincial for being “ denied the honour which is so easily granted to men vastly beneath my merits and deserts ; for what can any man do for the promotion of *your* interests that I have not done ?” pp. 98, 99, &c.



interiour of religion, though he so little regarded the exterior. Dr. Johnson observes, that “ he grew old without any visible worship ; but, that he lived without prayer, can hardly be affirmed ; his studies and meditations were an habitual prayer.” From a remark of Toland, that, “ in the latter part of his life, Milton frequented none of the assemblies of any particular sect of Christians, *nor made use of their particular rites in his family,*” have arisen assertions without proofs, by other biographers, that “ *he did not use any religious rite,*” and that “ *he never used prayer in his family.*” I am inclined to believe that he, who, in his divine poem, so carefully describes the morning and evening worship of our first parents, the first and last hours of the day employed in devotion, could hardly be negligent of reverence to God in his own household. I must not, however, withhold from notice a strange assertion of Milton, respecting prayer : “ <sup>k</sup> I believe that God is no more moved with a prayer elaborately penned, than men truly charitable are moved with the penned speech of a beggar !” To his determination of associating with no Church we owe the masterly and judicious observation of Johnson : “ To be of no Church is dangerous. Religion, of which the rewards are distant, and which is animated only by Faith and

\* Eiconoclastes, Prose-Works, vol. ii. p. 511. ed. 1698.



Hope, will glide by degrees out of the mind, unless it be invigorated and reimpresed by external ordinances, by stated calls to worship, and the salutary influence of example." Of our liturgy, as of episcopacy, Milton has often expressed his contempt. He is <sup>1</sup> said to have been a principal founder of the Calves-Head Club; a festival, which began to be held, during the usurpation, on the thirtieth of January; *in opposition* to Dr. Hammond, and other divines of the Church of England, who met privately to lament that day, in *a form of prayer*, little different from what we now find in the liturgy.

Milton's circumstances were never very affluent. The estate left him by his father was but small. In the civil war he sustained the loss of a considerable personal property, which he had lent to the Parliament. As Latin Secretary he enjoyed an annual salary of two hundred pounds, together with an estate of about sixty pounds a year which belonged to the plundered abbey of Westminster. Of these revenues, as well as of two thousand pounds which he had placed in the Excise-Office, he was deprived at the Restoration. He had before lost two thousand pounds by entrusting it to a scrivener; and, in the fire of London, his house in Bread-street was burnt. To Milton, however, the deficiency of

<sup>1</sup> See the Secret History of the Calves-Head Club, 1709, p. 17,



wealth was little disappointment. He had thirsted more after intellectual riches. The paucity of his wants, and the frugal management of what he retained, enabled him to live without distress. Of the property which he left, the publication of his Nuncupative Will has rectified the mistaken accounts of all his biographers before Mr. Hayley. If he sold his library before his death, as some have asserted, he was perhaps compelled to it by the pillage it had already sustained, and by the fear of its total plunder.

Of his family I shall subjoin a brief account. All his biographers notice his younger brother, Christopher, and his sister, Anne. Of two other sisters the existence has never been related. I have found, however, in the register of All-hallows Bread-street, the <sup>m</sup> births of Sarah and Tabitha Milton, and the death only of Sarah, to be recorded. Christopher was a royalist, and became, long after his brother's death, a judge. Through his brother's interest, he had compounded for his

<sup>m</sup> “ The xv<sup>th</sup> daye of July 1612 was baptized SARA, the dawghter of John Mylton, scrivener. She was buried the vi<sup>th</sup> of August following in the church.

“ The xxx<sup>th</sup> of January, 1613, [that is 1613-14,] was baptized TABITHA, the dawghter of Mr. John Mylton.

“ The third daye of December 1615 was baptized CHRISTOPHER, the sonne of John Mylton of this p̃she, scrivener.”

*Extracts from the Register.*



estate, in the rebellion, at the easy price of <sup>n</sup> eighty pounds. Anne must have been elder than either of her brothers ; for her birth is not to be found in the register already mentioned : She was probably the eldest child, and born before her father settled in Bread-street. Milton's Verses on her daughter, written in his seventeenth year, serve to corroborate this supposition. She was first married to Mr. Philips, afterwards to Mr. Agar, a friend of her first husband, who succeeded him in the Crown-Office of the Court of Chancery. By her first husband she had two sons, Edward and John, whom Milton educated ; by her second, two daughters. His brother, Christopher, had two daughters, Mary and Catherine ; and a son, Thomas, who succeeded Mr. Agar in his office. Of Milton's children, who survived him, Mr. Warton's concluding Note on the Nuncupative Will gives a distinct account. The several branches of his family appear to be now extinct. I may here observe that the case of Deborah, the youngest, which Mr. Warton deplores with true sensibility, was <sup>o</sup> first noticed in a very feeling manner, in *Mist's Weekly Journal*, April 29, 1727, and commended her to part of the little patronage which she obtained. Let me be per-

<sup>n</sup> So recorded in the volume of *Compositions*, already mentioned, p. lvii.

<sup>o</sup> It is also printed in the *European Magazine* for 1787, p. 65.



mitted also to cite a defence of the poet's conduct towards his children, in the language of a lady, who is an honour to her sex and country, and who is an elegant advocate for the subordination of domestick manners. Speaking of the *modern revolutionary spirit* in families, she observes "that, <sup>p</sup> among the faults with which it has been too much the fashion of recent times to load the memory of the incomparable Milton, one of the charges brought against his private character (for with his political character we have here nothing to do) has been, that he was so severe a father as to have compelled his daughters, after he was blind, to read aloud to him, for his sole pleasure, Greek and Latin authors of which they did not understand a word. But this is in fact nothing more than an instance of the strict domestick regulations of the age in which Milton lived; and should not be brought forward as a proof of the severity of his individual temper. Nor indeed in any case should it ever be considered as an hardship for an affectionate child to amuse an afflicted parent, even though it should be attended with a heavier sacrifice of her own pleasure than in the present instance."

From Milton's last wife, (whose good name also has been calumniated,) the early admirers of

<sup>p</sup> *Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education*, by Hannah More, vol. i. p. 147, 6th edit. 1799.



the poet learned that he used to compose his poetry chiefly in winter, and on his waking in a morning dictated to her sometimes twenty or thirty verses; that Spenser, Shakspeare, and Cowley, were his favourite English poets; and that he pronounced Dryden to be a rhymist rather than a poet. Dryden's best poems had not yet appeared. To Dryden, who often visited him, Milton acknowledged that Spenser was his original.

From Aubrey's manuscript it appears that Milton's "familiar learned acquaintance" were Andrew Marvell, Cyriack Skinner, and Dr. Paget. I have often wondered that Milton, who has affectionately recorded the good qualities of many friends, should have omitted to grace his pages with a tribute of respect to the name of Henry More, the celebrated Platonist, his fellow-collegian; by whom Mr. Warton supposes him to have been led to the study of the *divine philosophy*, and of whose poetry, I am persuaded, he was fond.

I must not close this humble account of Milton, without venturing to observe, that Dr. Johnson, in ridiculing the notion that a writer should suppose himself influenced by times or seasons, has perhaps too hastily decided on the intellectual impulses of the great poet.



THE  
NUNCUPATIVE WILL \*

OF

JOHN MILTON. <sup>a</sup>

WITH NOTES,

*BY THE REVEREND T. WARTON, B. D.*

---

MEMORANDUM, that JOHN MILTON, late of the parish of St. Giles Cripplegate in the Countie of Middlesex gentleman, deceased, at severall times before his death, and in particular, on or about the twentieth day of July, in the year of our Lord God 1674, being of perfect mind and memorie, declared his Will and intent as to the disposall of his estate after his death, in these words following, or of like effect: “ The portion due to me from Mr. Powell, my former wife’s father, I leave to the unkind children I had by her, having received no parte of it: but my meaning is, they shall have no other benefit of my estate than the said portion, and what I have besides done for them; they having been very undutifull to me. All the residue of my

\* [From Mr. Warton’s 2d edit. of Milton’s Smaller Poems, 1791.]

<sup>a</sup> As propounded in the Prerogative Court.



estate I leave to [the] disposall of Elizabeth my loving wife." Which words, or to the same effect, were spoken in the presence of CHRISTOPHER MILTON.<sup>b</sup>

X [Mark of] ELIZABETH FISHER.<sup>c</sup>

Nov. 23, 1674.<sup>d</sup>

<sup>b</sup> JOHN MILTON's younger brother: a strong royalist, and a professed papist. After the civil war, he made his composition through his brother's interest. Being a practitioner in the law, he lived to be an ancient Bencher of the Inner Temple: was made a judge of the Common Pleas, and knighted by king James the second; but, on account of his age and infirmities, he was at length dismissed from business, and retired to Ipswich, where he resided all the latter part of his life.

<sup>c</sup> A servant-maid of JOHN MILTON.

<sup>d</sup> Registr. Cur. Prærog. Cant. This Will was contested by Mary, Deborah, and Anne Milton, daughters of the poet's first wife Mary, daughter of Mr. Richard Powell, of Foresthill in Oxfordshire. The cause came to a regular sentence, which was given against the Will; and the widow, Elizabeth, was ordered to take Administration instead of a Probate. I must add here, that this cause, the subject of which needed no additional lustre from great names, was tried by that upright and able statesman, Sir Leoline Jenkins, Judge of the Prerogative Court, and Secretary of State; and that the depositions were taken in part before Dr. Trumbull, afterwards Sir William Trumbull, Secretary of State, and the celebrated friend of Pope. As a circumstantial and authentic history of this process, the following instruments, which were otherwise thought too curious to be suppressed, are subjoined.



## I.

*The Allegation propounding the Will, on which  
Allegation the Witnesses be examined. <sup>e</sup>*

Negotium Testamentarium, five probacionis  
Testamenti nuncupativi, five ultimæ Voluntatis,  
JOHANNIS MILTON, nuper dum vixit parochiæ  
S. Ægidii Cripplegate London generosi, defuncti,  
habent. &c. promotum per Elizabetham MIL-  
TON<sup>f</sup> Relictam, et Legatariam principalem no-

<sup>e</sup> Viz. Christopher MILTON, and JOHN MILTON's two ser-  
vant-maids Elizabeth and Mary Fisher. Witnesses on the part  
of the widow.

<sup>f</sup> This was his third wife, Elizabeth Minshull, of a gentle-  
man's family in Cheshire. He married her at the recommendation  
of his friend, and her relation, Dr. Paget, about the year 1661,  
and in his fifty-fourth year, soon after he had obtained his pardon  
from the restored king; being now blind and infirm, and wanting  
some more constant and confidential companion than a servant to  
attend upon his person. The elder Richardson insinuates, that  
this lady, being no poet or philosopher like her husband, used fre-  
quently to tease him for his carelessness or ignorance about money-  
matters, and that she was a *termagant*. He adds, that soon after  
their marriage, a royal offer was made to Milton of the resump-  
tion of his old department of Latin Secretary, and that, being  
strongly pressed by his wife to an acceptance, he scornfully re-  
plied, "Thou art in the right; you, as other women, *would ride  
in your Coach*. My aim is to live and die an *honest man*." LIFE,  
&c. p. xcix. seq. edit. 1734. From these papers, however, it  
appears, that she consulted her husband's humours, and treated his  
infirmities with tenderness. After his death in 1674, she retired  
to Namptwich in Cheshire, where she died about 1729. Mr.  
Pennant says, her father, Mr. Minshull, lived at Stoke in that



minatam in Testamento nuncupativo, five ultima Voluntate, dicti defuncti, contra Mariam, Annam, et Deboram MILTON, filias dicti defuncti.

THOMPSON. CLEMENTS.

Secundo Andreae, A. D. 1674. Quo die .... Thompson, nomine, procuratione, ac ultimus procurator legitimus, dictae Elizabethae MILTON, omnibus melioribus et effectualioribus [efficacioribus] via, modo, et meliori forma, necnon ad omnem juris effectum, exhibuit Testamentum nuncupativum dicti JOHANNIS MILTON defuncti, sic incipiens, “ MEMORANDUM, that JOHN MILTON, late of the parish of S. Giles, Cripplegate, &c.” Which words, or words to the same effect, were spoken in the presence of Christopher MILTON, and Elizabeth Fisher; et allegavit consimiliter, et dicens prout sequitur. I. Quod praefatus JOHANNES MILTON, dum vixit, mentis compos, ac in sua sana memoria existens, .... Testamentum suum nuncupativum modo in hoc negotio exhibitum ... tenoris schedulae .... testamentariae condidit, nun-

neighbourhood. W. Tour, and Gough's *Camden*, Cheshire, p. 436.

The third edition of *Paradise Lost* was published in 1678; and this is the poet's widow, to whom the copy of that work was then to devolve by original agreement, but who sold all her claims to Samuel Simmons, his bookseller, for eight pounds, according to her receipt given Decemb. 21, 1680.



cupavit, et declaravit; cæteraque omnia et singula dedit, donavit, reliquit, et disposuit, in omnibus, et per omnia, vel similiter in effectum, prout in dicto Testamento nuncupativo continetur, ac postea mortem obiit: ac Principalis Pars ista proponit conjunctim, divisim, et de quolibet. II. Item, quod tempore conditionis, declarationis, nuncupationis Testamenti, in hoc negotio exhibiti, præfatus JOHANNES MILTON perfecta fruebatur memoria; ac proponit ut supra. §

## II.

*Interrogatories addressed to the Witnesses examined upon the Allegation.*

Decemb. 5, 1674. Interrogatoria ministrata et ministranda ex parte Annæ, Mariæ, et Deboræ MILTON, testibus ex parte Elizabethæ MILTON productis sive producendis sequuntur.

*Imprimis*, Aske each witnesse, what relation to, or dependance on, the producent, they, or either of them, have; and to which of the parties they would give the victory were it in their power? Et interrogatur quilibet testis conjunctim, et divisim, et de quolibet.

2. *Item*, Aske each witnesse, what day, and what time of the day, the Will nuncupative was declared; what positive words did the deceased

§ Registr. Cur. Prærog. Cant. ut supr.



use in the declaring thereof? Can you positively sweare, that the deceased did declare that hee did leave the residue of his estate to the disposall of his wife, or did hee not say, “ I will leave the residue of my estate to my wife?” *Et fiat ut supra.*

3. *Item*, Upon what occasion did the deceased declare the said Will? Was not the deceased in perfect health at the same time? Doe you not think, that the deceased, if he declared any such Will, declared it in a present passion, or some angry humour against some or one of his children by his former [first] wife? *Et fiat ut supra.*

4. *Item*, Aske each witnesse, whether the parties ministrant were not and are not greater frequenters of the Church, <sup>h</sup> and good livers; and what cause of displeasure had the deceased against them? *Et fiat ut supra.*

5. *Item*, Aske Mr. [Christopher] MILTON, and each other witnesse, whether the deceased's Will, if any such was made, was not, that the

<sup>h</sup> Here seems to be an insinuation, that our poet's displeasure against those three daughters, arose partly from their adherence to those principles; which, in preference to his own, they had received, or rather inherited, from their mother's family, who were noted and active royalists. Afterwards, the description *good livers* is not to be understood in its general and proper sense, which could not have offended Milton; but as arising from what went before, and meaning much the same thing, that is, *regular in their attendance on the established worship.*



deceased's wife should have £. 1000, and the children of the said Christopher MILTON the residue; and whether she hath not promised him that they should have it, if she prevailed in this Cause? Whether the said Mr. MILTON hath not since the deceased's death confessed soe much, or some part thereof? *Et fiat ut supra.*

6. *Item*, Aske each witnesse, whether what is left to the ministrants by the said Will, is not reputed a very bad or altogether desperate debt<sup>i</sup>? *Et fiat ut supra.*

7. Aske the said Mr. MILTON, whether he did not gett the said Will drawn upp, and inform

<sup>i</sup> That is, the marriage portion, promised, but never paid, to JOHN MILTON, by Mr. Richard Powell, the father of his first wife; and which the said JOHN bequeathed to the daughters of that match, the ministrants, Anne, Mary, and Deborah.

They were married in 1643. I have now before me an original "Inventorie of the goods of Mr. Richard Powell of Forresthill, in the county of Oxon, taken the 10th of June A. D. 1646." This seems to have been taken in consequence of a seizure of Mr. Powell's House by the rebels. His distresses in the royal cause probably prevented the payment of his daughter's marriage portion. By the number, order, and furniture of the rooms, he appears to have lived as a country gentleman, in a very extensive and liberal style of house-keeping. This I mention to confirm what is said by Philips, that Mr. Powell's daughter abruptly left her husband within a month after their marriage, disgusted with his spare diet and hard study, "after having been used at home to a great house, and much company and joviality, &c." I have also seen in Mr. Powell's house at Forresthill many papers, which show the active part he took in favour of the Royalists: With some others relating to the Rangership of the Shotover forest, bearing his signature.



the writer to what effect he should draw it? And did he not enquire of the other witnesses, what they would or could depose? And whether he hath not solicited this Cause, and payd fees to the Proctour about it? *Et fiat ut supra.*

8. *Item*, Aske each witnesse, what fortune the deceased did in his life-time bestowe on the ministrants? And whether the said *Anne MILTON* is not lame, and almost helpleffe? <sup>k</sup> *Et fiat ut supra.*

9. *Item*, Aske each witnesse, what value is the deceased's estate of, as neare as they can guess? *Et fiat ut supra.*<sup>1</sup>

## II.

*Depositions and cross-examinations of the said witnesses.*

Elizabetha MILTON, Relicta et Legataria principalis JOHANNIS MILTON defuncti, contra Annam, Mariam, et Deboraham MILTON, filias ejusdem defuncti. Super Allegatione articulata et Testamento nuncupativo JOHANNIS MILTON defuncti, ex parte Elizabethæ MILTON predictæ, in hoc negotio, secundo Andreae, 1674, dato <sup>m</sup> et exhibitis.

<sup>k</sup> She was deformed, and had an impediment in her speech.

His grand-daughter Elizabeth Foster, by the third daughter Deborah, often spoke of his harshness to his daughters, and that he refused to have them taught to write.

<sup>1</sup> Registr. Cur. Prærog. Cant. ut supr.

<sup>m</sup> Sic, ut et in infra, pro *Milton*.



Quinto Decembris 1674. Christopherus MILTON, villæ Gipwici in com. Suffolciæ ortus infra parochiam Omnium Sanctorum *Bredstreete*, London, ætat. 58 annor. aut eo circiter, testis, &c. Ad omnes articulos dictæ Allegationis, et ad Testamentum nuncupativum JOHANNIS MILTON, generosi, defuncti, in hoc negotio dat. et exhibit. deponit et dicit, That on, or about the twentieth day of July, 1674, the day certaine he now remembreth not, this deponent being a practicer in the Law, and a Bencher in the Inner Temple, but living in vacations at Ipswich, did usually at the end of the Terme visit JOHN MILTON, his this deponent's brother the Testator articulate, deceased, before his going home; and soe at the end of Midsummer Terme last past, he this deponent went to visit his said brother, and then found him in his chamber within his owne house, scituate on Bunhill <sup>n</sup> within the parish of S. Giles, Crepelgate, London: And at that tyme,

<sup>n</sup> Sometimes called the *Artillery-walk*, leading to Bunhill-fields. This was his last settled place of abode, and where he lived longest. Richardson calls this house a "small house, where he died about fourteen years after he was out of publick employ." Ubi supr. p. xciii. It was here that he wrote or finished *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*, and *Samson Agonistes*. But in 1665, when the plague broke out in London, he retired to Chalfont Saint Giles, where his friend Ellwood, a quaker, had taken a house for him; and the next year, when the danger was over, he came back to Bunhill-fields. The house at Chalfont, in which he resided in this short space of time, and where he planned or began *Paradise Regained*, is still standing, small, but pleasantly situated. See



he the said Testator, being not well, (and this deponent being then going into the country,) in a serious manner, with an intent, (as he believes,) that what he then spoke should be his WILL, if he dyed before his this deponent's coming the next time to London, declared his Will in these very words as neare as this deponent can now call to mynd: Viz. "Brother, the porcion due to me from Mr. Powell, my former [first] wife's father, I leave to the unkind children I had by her: but I have receaved noe part of it, and my Will and meaning is, they shall have noe other benefit of my estate, than the said porcion and what I have besides don for them: they haveing been very undutifull to me. And all the residue of my estate I leave to the disposall of Elizabeth my loveing wife." She, the said Elizabeth his the deceased's wife, and Elizabeth Fysher his the deceased's then maide-servant, was [at the] same tyme going upp and downe the roome, but whether she then

Ellwood's *Life of Himself*, p. 246. Who calls it "a pretty box." [Mr. Dunster, in the additions to his edition of *Paradise Regained*, remarks that the house is not pleasantly situated. "The adjacent country is indeed extremely pleasant; but the immediate spot is as little picturesque or pleasing as can be well imagined. Immediately in front of the house, a grass field rises so abruptly as completely to exclude all prospect: and the common road of the village passes by the gable end, adjoining to which is the end of a small dwelling, which runs behind that inhabited by Milton."]



heard the said deceased, soe declare his will as above or not, he knoweth not.

And the said testator at the premises was of perfect mind and memory and talked and discoursed sensibly and well, *et aliter nescit deponere.*

CHR. MILTON.

AD INTERROGATORIA.

Ad 1<sup>m</sup>. Interr. *respondet*, that the party producent in this cause was and is the relict of the said deceased, who was his this respondent's brother ; and the parties ministring these interrogatories were and are in repute, and soe he beleeveth his the said deceased's children by a former wife: and for his part, he wisheth right to take place, and soe would give it if in his power ; and likewise wisheth that his brother's Will might take effect.

Ad 2<sup>m</sup>. Interr. *respondet*, that on what day of the moneth or weeke the said deceased declared his Will, as is above deposed, he now remembreth not precisely ; but well remembreth, that it was in a forenoone, and on the very day he this deponent was goeing in the country in [the] Ipswich coach, which goeth not out of towne till noone or thereabout : and he veryly beleeveth in his conscience, that the residue of his estate he did then dispose of in these very words, viz.



“ And all the residue of my estate I leave to the disposall of Elizabeth my loving wife ;” or he used words to the selfe same effect, *et aliter referendo se ad pre-depos. nescit respondere.*

Ad 3<sup>m</sup>. Interr. *respondet*, that the said deceased was then ill of the gout, and what he then spake touching his Will was in a very calme manner ; only [he] complained, but without passion, that his children had been unkind to him, but that his wife had been very kind and careful of him ; and he believeth the only reason induced the said deceased at that time to declare his Will was, that he this deponent might know it before his going into the country, *et aliter referendo se ad pre-deposita nescit respondere.*

Ad 4<sup>m</sup>. Interr. *respondet*, that he knoweth not how the parties ministring these interrogatories frequent the church, or in what manner of behaviour of life and conversation they are of, they living apart from their father four or five yeares last past ; and as touching his the deceased's displeasure with them, he only heard him say at the tyme of declaring of his Will, that they were undutifull and unkind to him, not expressing any particulars ; but in former tymes he hath herd him complaine, that they were careless of him being blind, and made nothing of deserteing him, *et aliter nescit respondere.*



Ad 5<sup>m</sup>. Interr. *respondet*, that since this respondent's coming to London this Michaelmas Terme last paste, this respondent's sister, the party now producent in this cause, told this respondent, that the deceased his brother did after his this respondent's going into the country in Trinity vacation last summer [say,] that, if she should have any overplus above a 1000<sup>l</sup>. come to her hands of his the deceased's estate, she should give the same to this respondent's children: but the deceased himselfe did not declare any such thing to this respondent at the tyme of his declaring his Will, the tyme above deposed of.

Ad 6<sup>m</sup>. Interr. *respondet*, that he beleeveth that what is left to the parties ministring these interrogatories by the said deceased's Will, is in the hands of persons of ability abell to pay the same, being their grandmother and uncle; and he hath seen the grandfather's Will, wherein 'tis particularly directed to be paid unto them by his executors, *et aliter nescit respondere*.

Ad 7<sup>m</sup>. Interr. *respondet*, that he this respondent did draw upp the very Will executed in this cause, and write it with his owne hand, when he came to this court, about the 23d. of November last past, and at that tyme this respondent did read the same all over to Elizabeth Fisher the said deceased's late maid servant, and



ſhe ſaid ſhe remembered the ſame, and in confirmation whereof ſet her marke thereto in manner as on the ſame Will executed in this cauſe is now to be ſeen. And this reſpondent waited on the ſaid deceased's widdow once at Doctor Exton's chambers about this ſuite, at which tyme ſhe wanted ſome halfe crownes, and this reſpondent lent her then two halfe crownes, but more he hath at noe tyme paid either to Doctor or Proctor in this cauſe.

Ad 8<sup>m</sup>. Interr. *reſpondet*, that he knoweth of noe fortune given by the ſaid deceased to the parties miniſtring theſe interrogatories, beſides the portion which he was promiſed with his former wife in marriage, being a 1000/. which is ſtill unpaid beſids the intereſt thereof for about twenty yeares, ſaveing his charges in their maintenance and breeding, *et aliter neſcit reſpondere*, ſaveing that Anne Milton interr. is lame and helples.

Ad ult. reddit cauſas ſcientiæ ſuæ ut ſupra.

Die prid.

Repetit. cor. Doctore.

CHR. MILTON.

Lloyd Surrog.



Milton con. Thompson. Milton et Milton Clements.

Sup. All<sup>nis.</sup> artic. et Testamento nuncupativo Johan. Milton defuncti ex parte Elizabethæ Milton in hujusmodi Causa dat. et admiff. examinat.

15<sup>o</sup>. Dec. 1674.

Maria Fisher soluta famul. domestica Johan. Batten habitan. in vico vocat. Bricklane in Old Streete ubi moram fecit per Spacium sex hebdomadarum aut eo circiter, antea cum Benjamino Whitcomb Mercatore habitan. in vico vocat. Coleman Streete London per Spacium 3m. Mensium, antea cum Guiddon Culcap infra locum vocat. Smock Alley prope Spittlefields per Spacium unius anni, aut eo circiter, antea cum Johanne Bayley infra Oppidum Milton in Com. Stafford per Spacium duorum annorum, antea cum Johanne Baddily infra parochiam de Milton præd. per Spacium trium annorum, et antea cum quomodo Rogers Hargrave infra parochiam de Milton præd. per Spacium duorum annorum aut eo circiter, orta infra parochiam de Norton in Com.



Stafford præd. ætatis 23 aut eo circiter, testis, &c.

Ad omnes articulos dictæ All<sup>nis</sup>. et ad testamentum nuncupativum Johan. Milton testatoris in hac causa defuncti in hujusmodi neg<sup>o</sup>. dat. et exhibit. *deponit* et *dicit*, that this deponent knew and was well acquainted with the articulate John Milton the testator in this cause deceased, for about a twelve moneth before his death, who dyed about a moneth since to the best of this deponent's remembrance ; And faith, that on a day hapning about two moneths since, as neare as this deponent can remember, this deponent being then in the kitchen of the house of the foresaid John Milton scituate against the Artillery Ground neare Bunhill Fields, and about noone of the same day, the said deceased and the producent Elizabeth his wife being then at dinner in the said kitchen, hee the said deceased amongst other discourse then had betweene him and his said wife, did then speake to his said wife and utter these words, viz. " Make much of mee as long as I live, for thou knowest I have given thee all when I dye at thy disposall : " there being then present in the said kitchen this deponent's sister and *contest* ° namely Elizabeth Fysher. And the said deceased was at that time of perfect mind and memory, and talked and

° i. e. Fellow-witness Con-Testis.



discourfed sensibly and well, and was very merry, and feemed to be in good health of body, *et aliter nescit.*

Signum

MARIÆ FISHER.

AD INTERROGATORIA.

Ad primum Interr. *respondet*, that this respondent hath noe relation or dependance on the producent Elizabeth Milton, that it is indifferent to this respondent which of the parties in this suite obtaine, and would give the victory in this cause if in her power to that party that hath most right; but which party hath most right thereto this respondent knoweth not, *et aliter nescit.*

Ad secundum Interr. *respondet*, that this respondent doth not remember the day when the deceased declared the words by her pre-deposed, but remembreth that it was about noone of such day that the words which hee then declared were these, viz. “ Make much of mee as long as I live, for thou knowest I have given thee all when I dye at thy disposall;” then speaking to his wife Elizabeth Milton the party producent in this cause, *et aliter nescit.*

Ad tertium Interr. *respondet*, that the deceased, when hee declared the words pre-deposed, was then at dinner with his wife the party producent



and was then very merry, and seemed to be in good health of body; but upon what occasion hee spoke the said words shee knoweth not, *et aliter nescit.*

Ad quartum Interr. *respondet*, that this respondent knoweth neither of the parties ministrant in this cause saving this respondent once saw Anne Milton one of the ministrants, *et nescit respondere per parte sua.*

*Ad quintum Interr. nescit respondere.*

*Ad sextum Interr. nescit respondere.*

*Ad septimum Interr. non concernit eam, et nescit respondere.*

Ad octavum Interr. *respondet*, that this respondent once saw the Interr. Anne Milton but doth not remember whether shee was lame or helpleffe, *et aliter nescit.*

Ad 9<sup>m</sup>. Interr. *respondet*, that this respondent knoweth nothing of the deceased's estate or the value thereof, *et aliter nescit.*

Eodem Die

Signum

Repetit coram Doctore.

MARIÆ FISHER.

Digby Surro. &c. pñte.

Tho Welham, N. P.



Eodem Die

Elizabetha Fisher famula Domestica Elizabethæ Milton p̄tis producentis in hac causa cum qua et Johanne Milton ejus Marito defuncto vixit per Spacium 13 Mensium, antea cum quodam Thoma Adams apud Bagnall in Com. Stafford per Spacium trium annorum et sex Mensium, antea cum W<sup>mo</sup>. Bourne Gen. infra parochiam de Woolstilton in Com. Stafford præd. per Spacium duorum annorum, orta infra parochiam de Norton in Com. præd. ætatis 28 annorum aut eo circiter, testis, &c.

Ad omnes articulos dictæ All<sup>nis</sup>. et ad testamentum nuncupativum Johan. Milton testatoris in hac causa defuncti in hujusmodi negotio dat. exhibit et admiff. *deponit et dicit*, that this deponent was servant unto Mr. JOHN MILTON the testator in this cause deceased for about a yeare before his death, who dyed upon a Sunday the \*fifteenth of November last at night, And saith that on a day hapning in the month of July last, the time more certainly she remembereth not, this deponent being then in the deceased's lodging chamber, hee the said deceased, and the

\* [She appears to have been mistaken, a single week, in her deposition. See the Life, p. cxxviii.]



party producent in this cause his wife, being then alsoe in the said chamber at dinner together, and the said Elizabeth Milton the party producent having provided something for the deceased's dinner which hee very well liked, <sup>p</sup> hee the said deceased then spoke to his said wife these or the like words as neare as this deponent can remember, viz. "God have mercy Betty, I see thou wilt performe according to thy promise in providing mee such dishes as I think fitt whilst I live, and when I dye thou knowest that I have left thee all," there being noebody present in the said chamber with the said deceased and his wife but this deponent: And the said testator at that time was of perfect mind and memory, and talked and discoursed sensibly and well, but was then indisposed in his body by reason of the distemper of the gout, which hee had then upon him. Further this deponent saith, that shee hath severall times heard the said deceased, since the time above deposed of, declare and say, that hee had made provision for his children in his life time, and had spent the greatest part of his estate in providing for them, and that hee was resolved hee would doe noe more for them living or dyeing, for that little part which hee had left hee

<sup>p</sup> His grand-daughter Elizabeth Foster, by his third daughter Deborah, used to say, that he was delicate, but temperate in his diet.



had given it to his wife the articulate Elizabeth the producent, or hee used words to that effect. And likewise told this deponent, that there was a thousand pounds left in Mr. Powell's hands to be disposed amongst his children hereafter. By all which words this respondent verily beleeveth that the said testator had given all his estate to the articulate Elizabeth his wife, and that shee should have the same after his decease, *et aliter nescit respondere*, saving that the said deceased was at the severall times of declaring the words last pre-deposed alsoe of perfect mind and memory.

Signum

ELIZAB. FISHER.

#### AD INTERROGATORIA.

Ad primum Interr. *respondet*, that this respondent was servant to the deceased in his life time and is now servant to the producent and therefore hath a dependency upon her as her servant, that if the victory were in this respondent's power shee would give the deceased's estate equally to be shared betweene the ministrants and the producent, *et aliter nescit*.

Ad secundum Interr. *respondet*, that this respondent doth not remember on what day the



deceased declared the words first by her afore depofed, but it was about noone of fuch day when hee was at dinner that the precise words as neare as this respondent can remember which the deceased used at that time were thefe, viz. “ God have mercy Betty (fpeaking to his wife Elizabeth Milton for foe hee ufually called her) I fee thou wilt performe according to thy promise in providing mee fuch difhes as I think fitt whilst I live, and when I dye thou knoweft that I have left thee all,” *et aliter nescit*; faving that this respondent well remembreth that the deceased declared the words laft by her depofed to the articles of the allegation to this respondent once on a Sunday in the afternoone, but on what day of the month or in what month the faid Sunday then happened this respondent doth not remember.

Ad tertium Interr. *respondet*, that the occafion of the deceased’s fpeaking of the words depofed by this respondent in her answer to the next preecedent interrogatory was upon the producent’s provideing the deceased fuch victuals for his dinner as hee liked, and that he was then indifferent well in health, faving that fome time he was troubled with the paine of the gout, and that hee was at that time very merry and not in any paffion or angry humour, neither at that time fpoke any thing againft any of his



children that this respondent heard of, *et aliter nescit.*

Ad quartum Interr. *respondet*, that this respondent hath heard the deceased declare his displeasure against the parties ministrant his children, and particularly the deceased declared to this respondent that, a little before hee was married to Elizabeth Milton his now relict, a former maid servant of his told Mary one of the deceased's daughters and one of the ministrants, that shee heard the deceased was to be married, to which the said Mary replied to the said maid servant, that that was noe news to heare of his wedding, but if shee could heare of his death that was something: and further told this respondent, that all his said children did combine together and counsel his maid servant to cheat him the deceased in her markettings, and that his said children had made away some of his bookes and would have sold the rest of his bookes to the dunghill women; or hee the said deceased spoke words to this respondent to the selfe same effect and purpose: that this respondent knoweth not what frequenters of the church, or what good livers, the parties ministrant or either of them are, *et aliter nescit.*

Ad quintum Interr. *respondet*, that this respondent doth not know that the deceased's wife was to have 1000*l.* and the interrogative chil-



dren of Christopher Milton the residue, nor doth this respondent know that the said Elizabeth, the deceased's wife, hath promised the interrogative Christopher Milton or his children any such thing in case shee should prevaile in this cause; that the said Mrs. Milton never confessed soe much in this respondent's hearing, or to any body else that this respondent knoweth of, *et aliter nescit.*

Ad sextum Interr. *respondet*, that this respondent believeth that what is left the deceased's children in the Will nuncupative in this cause executed and mencioned therein to be due from Mr. Powell, is a good debt; for that the said Mr. Powell is reputed a rich man, *et aliter nescit.*

Ad septimum Interr. *respondet*, that this respondent did voluntarily tell the interrogative Mrs. Milton, what shee heard the deceased say which was to the effect by her pre-deposed, *et aliter nescit.*

Ad octavum Interr. *respondet*, that this respondent knoweth not what the deceased did in his life time bestow on the ministrants his children, and that the interrogative Anne Milton is lame, but hath a trade and can live by the same, which is the making of gold and silver lace and which the deceased bred her up to, *et aliter nescit.*



Ad nonum Interr. *respondet*, that this respondent knoweth not the deceased's estate, or the value thereof, *et aliter nescit*.

Eodem Die

Signum

Repetit coram Doctore

ELIZABETHE FISHER.

Trumbull Surro. &c.

Tho. Welham, N. P. <sup>a</sup>

GEORGE GOSLING,

JAMES TOWNLEY,

ROBERT DODWELL,

DEPUTY REGISTERS.

<sup>a</sup> Cur. Prærog. Cant. ut supra.



## IV.

Grant of Letters of Administration to the widow  
Elizabeth. <sup>r</sup>

Die 25<sup>to</sup>. Februarii 167<sup>4</sup><sub>3</sub>.

JOHANNES MILTON. Vicefimo

quinto Die Februarii emanavit Commissio Elizabethæ MILTON Relictæ JOHANNIS MILTON nuper Parochiæ Sancti Egidii Cripplegate in Com. Mid. Defuncti, hēntis, &c. ad Administrand. bona, jura, et credita dicti defuncti, de bene &c. jurat, Testamento Nuncupativo dicti defuncti : aliter per antedictam Elizabetham MILTON Allegato, nondum Probato.

ult. Julii.

ult. Dec.

GEORGE GOSTLING,

JAMES TOWNLEY,

ROBERT DODWELL,

DEPUTY REGISTERS.

<sup>r</sup> The reader will compare these evidences with the printed accounts of Milton's biographers on this subject; who say, that he sold his library before his death, and left his family fifteen hundred pounds, which his widow Elizabeth seized, and only



gave one hundred pounds to each of his three daughters. Of this widow, Philips relates, rather harshly, that she persecuted his children in his life time, and *cheated* them at his death.

Milton had children, who survived him, only by his first wife, the three daughters so after named. Of these, Anne, the first, deformed in stature, but with a handsome face, married a master builder, and died of her first childbirth, with the infant. Mary, the second, died single. Deborah, the third, and the greatest favourite of the three, went over to Ireland as companion to a lady in her father's life time; and afterwards married Abraham Clarke, a weaver in Spital-fields, and died, aged seventy-six in August 1727. This is the daughter that used to read to her father; and was well known to Richardson, and Professor Ward: a woman of a very cultivated understanding, and not inelegant of manners. She was generously patronised by Addison; and by queen Caroline, who sent her a present of fifty guineas. She had seven sons and three daughter, of whom only Caleb and Elizabeth are remembered. Caleb migrated to Fort Saint George, where perhaps he died. Elizabeth, the youngest daughter, married Thomas Foster a weaver in Spittle-fields, and had seven children, who all died. She is said to have been a plain sensible woman; and kept a petty grocer's or chandler's shop, first at lower Holloway, and afterwards in Cock-lane near Shoreditch church. In April, 1750, *Comus* was acted for her benefit: Doctor Johnson, who wrote the Prologue, says, "she had so little acquaintance with diversion or gaiety, that she did not know what was intended when a benefit was offered her." The profits of the performance were only one hundred and thirty pounds \*; although Doctor Newton contributed largely, and twenty pounds were given by Jacob Tonson the bookseller. On this trifling augmentation to their small stock, she and her husband removed to Islington, where they both soon died. So much greater is our taste, our charity, and general national liberality, at the distance of forty years, that I will venture to pronounce, that, in the present day, a benefit at one of our theatres for the relief of a poor and an infirm grand-daughter of

\* From the information of my friend, Isaac Reed, Esq., I am enabled to add, to Mr. Warton's account, that the Receipts of the House were 147 £. 14 s. 6 d., from which the Expences deducted were 80 £.



the author of *Comus* and *Paradise Lost*, would have been much more amply and worthily supported.

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THESE seem to have been the grounds, upon which Milton's Nuncupative Will was pronounced invalid. First, there was wanting what the Civil Law terms a *rogatio testium*, or a solemn bidding of the persons present, to take notice that the words he was going to deliver were to be his Will. The Civil Law requires this form, to make men's verbal declarations operate as Wills; otherwise, they are to be presumed to be words of common calling or loose conversation. And the Statute of the twenty-ninth of Charles the Second [c. iii.] has adopted this Rule; as may be seen in the 19th clause of that Statute, usually called the *Statute of Frauds*, which passed in the year 1676, two years after Milton's death. Secondly, the words, here attested by the three witnesses, are not words delivered at the same time; but one witness speaks to one declaration made at one time, and another to another declaration made at another time. And although the declarations are of similar import, this circumstance will not satisfy the demands of the Law; which requires, that the three witnesses who are to support a Nuncupative Will, must speak to the identical words uttered at one and the same time. There is yet another requisite in Nuncupative Wills, which is not found here; namely, that the words be delivered in the last sickness of a party: whereas the words here attested appear to have been delivered when the party was in a tolerable state of health, at least under no immediate danger of death. On these principles we may presume Sir Leoline Jenkins to have acted in the rejection of Milton's Will: although the three witnesses apparently told the truth in what they deposed. The Judge, deciding against the Will, of course decreed administration of the Intestate's effects to the widow.

For an investigation of these papers in the Prerogative Registry, for an explanation of their nature and purport, and of other



technical difficulties which they present to one unacquainted with the records and more ancient practice of the Prerogative court in testamentary proceedings, I must confess myself indebted to the kind attention and friendship of SIR WILLIAM SCOTT. There are other papers in the Commons belonging to this business: but as they are mere forms of law, as they throw no new light on the cause, and furnish no anecdotes of Milton and his family, they are here omitted. WARTON.



*A LIST of such Editions of Milton's POETICAL  
WORKS as have hitherto been met with by the  
editor of these volumes.*

- I. A Maske presented at Ludlow Castle, 1634, &c. Printed for H. Robinson, 1637. 4°. This is Lawes's edition of *Comus*. See vol. v. p. 180.
- II. *Lycidas*, in the *Cambridge Verses*, 1638. 4°. See vol. v. p. 3.
- III. Poems of Mr. John Milton, both English and Latin, composed at several times. Printed by his true copies. The Songs were set in musick by Mr. Henry Lawes, gentleman of the Kings Chappel, &c. Printed and published according to order. London, Printed by Ruth Raworth for Humphrey Moseley, &c. 1645. small 8<sup>vo</sup>. with his portrait by Marshall. See vol. vi. p. 295.
- IV. *Paradise Lost*, a Poem written in ten books, by John Milton. Licensed and Entred according to order. London, Printed and are to be sold by Peter Parker under Creed Church neer Aldgate; And by Robert Boulter at the Turks Head in Bishopsgate-street; And Matthias Walker under St. Dunstons Church in Fleet-street. 1667. 4°. This is the *first title page* of the *first edition*. The poem immediately follows the title-page, without any arguments or list of errata.

2d *Title-page*, &c. *Paradise Lost*, a Poem in ten books. The Author J. M. Licensed and Entred according to order. London, Printed and are to be sold by Peter Parker, &c. [as before] 1668.

3d *Title-page*, &c. *Paradise Lost*, a Poem in ten books. The Author John Milton. London, Printed by S. Simmons, and to be sold by S. Thomson at the Bishops-head in Duck-lane, H. Mortlack at the White Hart in Westminster Hall, M. Walker under St. Dunstons Church in Fleet-street, and R. Boulter at the Turks-Head in Bishopsgate street, 1668.



To these titles of 1668, the address of *The Printer to the Reader*, and the Arguments of each book, immediately succeed. See vol. ii. p. i. A table of errata also precedes the poem.

4th *Title-page*, &c. *Paradise Lost*, a Poem in ten books. The Author John Milton. London, Printed by S. Simmons, and are to be sold by T. Helder at the Angel in Little Brittain. 1669. With the address of *The Printer to the Reader*, and the Arguments.

5th *Title-page*, &c. *Paradise Lost*, a Poem in ten books. The Author John Milton. London, Printed by S. Simmons &c. [as before] 1669, but without the subsequent address of *The Printer to the Reader*, yet not without the Arguments; which appear to have been reprinted, as the two last leaves of the poem seem also to have been, in this *fifth* typographical alteration.

Of this edition some errata appear to have been corrected in some sheets while they were passing through the press. I will mention an instance or two. Mr. Lofft observes, that the 257th line of the fifth book “ begins a new paragraph in his copy of 1667, and in that of 1669, and has no comma after *cloud* : but in that of 1668 it continues unbroken ; and has a comma after *cloud*.”—I have two copies of 1668, one of which, (in its original binding,) begins a paragraph with this verse, and has no comma after *cloud*. The other agrees with Mr. Lofft’s statement. Again, the list of errata to my copy of 1668 directs *in* to be substituted for *with*, in the penultimate line of the third book : *In* is printed in both my copies of 1668. I have a copy of 1669 in which *with* remains. In the copies of 1668 and 1669 the number of this verse also differs. Several variations of this kind might be pointed out. Perhaps some leaves were cancelled.

v. *Paradise Regained*, a Poem in IV books. To which is added *Samson Agonistes*. The Author John Milton. London, Printed by J. M. for John Starkey &c. 1671. 8vo.

vi. *Poems*, &c. Upon Several Occasions. By Mr. John Milton: Both English and Latin, &c. Composed at several



times. With a small Tractate of Education to Mr. Hartlib. London, Printed for Tho. Dring &c. 1673. small 8vo. To the English poems in this edition were first added, i. Ode on the death of a fair infant. ii. At a Vacation Exercise in the College. iii. On the new forcers of conscience under the Long Parliament. iv. Horace to Pyrrha. v. Nine Sonnets. vi. All the English Psalms. To the Latin poems, i. Apologus de Rustico et Hero. ii. Ad Joannem Roufium, &c. In this edition the epistle from Sir Henry Wotton is omitted. See vol. v. pp. 175, 176.

vii. Paradise Lost, a Poem in twelve books. The Author John Milton. *The Second Edition*, Revised and Augmented by the same Author. London, Printed by S. Simmons, &c. 1674. small 8vo. With his portrait by Dolle, and with the commendatory verses of Barrow and Marvell. In the Advertisement to the Glasgow editions of the first book of Paradise Lost in quarto, and of the whole poem in octavo, both printed in 1750, an edition of 1672 is mentioned as the standard edition, of which the text is in those editions adopted. After a very extensive and diligent inquiry, I have been unable, however, to meet with any copy bearing the date of 1672.

viii. Paradise Lost, &c. 3d Edition. 1678. small 8vo.

ix. Par. Regained and Samson &c. 1680. 8vo.

x. Par. Lost, 4th Edition. With his portrait by White, and other plates. Published by subscription. See the Life, p. cxv. Lond. Printed by Miles Flesher for Richard Bentley, &c. 1688. Fol. To this edition the two following poems are usually, but not always, found adjoined.

xi. Par. Regained, Lond. Printed by R. E., and sold by Randal Taylor. 1688. Fol.

xii. Samson Agonistes, Lond. Printed and sold by Randal Taylor. 1688. Fol.

xiii. Paradise Lost, and Regained, with Cuts. London. 1692. Fol.

xiv. Paradise Lost. Lond. 1695. Fol. With Notes by P. Hume, and with a Table of the most remarkable parts



of the poem, under the three heads of Descriptions, Similies, and Speeches.

xv. Par. Regained, Samson, and the Smaller Poems, were also printed, in folio for Tonson, in 1695, and are most frequently found united with the Par. Lost of the same year.

xvi. The Poetical Works, in 2 vols. large 8vo. London. Printed for Tonson, 1705.

xvii. The same, 2 vols. 8vo. 1707.

xviii. Paradise Lost, for Tonson, 12mo. 1711. This edition is much esteemed. Tickell seems to have printed his edition from it. To this edition is added the index of the principal matters, which Dr. Newton supposed to have been first inserted in Tickell's edition.

xix. Par. Regained, Samson, and the Smaller Poems, Lond. for Tonson, 1713. 12mo. This edition is also valuable. It rectifies several errors of the text in the handsome, but incorrect, editions of 1705 and 1707.

This edition appeared with another bookseller's name (W. Taylor) in the *general* title-page, and with the date of 1721: But in the *separate* titles of Samson, and the Poems, the true date remains. It is unquestionably the edition of 1713 with a new title-page.

xx. Paradise Lost, with plates. Lond. 1719. 12mo.

xxi. The Poetical Works, in 2 vols. 4to. for Tonson, 1720.

With Mr. Addison's Criticism on the Par. Lost, and an Index of the principal matters. This is Tickell's edition.

It is splendidly printed. A list of more than 300 subscribers is prefixed to it.

xxii. The same, in 2 vols. 12mo. With Mr. Addison's Criticism. 1721.

xxii \*. Paradise Lost, 8vo. Dublin, for G. Grierson, 1724.

xxiii. Paradise Lost, to which is prefixed an Account of the Life of Milton, 8vo. Lond. 1725. Fenton's edition.

xxiv. Par. Regained, Samson, and the Smaller Poems, under the care also of Fenton, 8vo. 1725.

xxv. The Poetical Works, 2 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1727. Fenton's.



xxvi. The same, 2 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1730. Fenton's.

xxvii. The same, with Mr. Addison's Criticism, 2 vols. 12mo. Lond. 1731.

xxviii. Paradise Lost, 4to. 1732. Bentley's edition.

xxix. Paradise Lost, 8vo. Lond. 1737.

xxx. The same, 8vo. Lond. 1738.

xxxi. The same, with Mr. Addison's Criticism, 8vo. Lond. 1739.

|| xxxii. Paradise Lost, 8vo. Tonson. Lond. 1741.

xxxiii. Par. Regained, Samson, and the Smaller Poems, beautifully printed, and on a fine paper, large 8vo. Lond. 1742.

xxxiv. Paradise Lost, in 2 vols. 12mo. Lond. For Tonson. 1746.

xxxv. Par. Regained, Samson, and the Smaller Poems, in 2 vols. 12mo. Lond. For Tonson, 1747. This and the preceding edition are printed with great correctness.

xxxvi. Paradise Lost, compared with the authentick editions, and revised by John Hawkey, editor of the Latin Classics. Dublin, printed by S. Powell for the editor. 1747. large 8vo. This edition, and the edition of Paradise Regained by the same person, are very handsomely printed, and are highly to be valued for their accuracy. They are now extremely scarce.

xxxvii. Paradise Lost, 4to. Dublin, 1747.

xxxviii. The same, "printed on Irish paper," 8vo. Dublin. 1748.

xxxix. Samson, Poems upon several occasions, and Comus, 8vo. Dublin, 1748.

xl. Paradise Lost, with Notes of Various Authors, by Dr. Newton, in 2 vols. 4to. Lond. 1749.

xli. Paradise Lost, Book the first. 4to. Glasgow, 1750. With Notes: in which "are illustrated the various allusions to ancient mythology, sacred and profane, which are so frequent in the first book of this divine poem. Many passages too of the ancient poets are there remarked, of which Milton has so admirably availed himself, or, to say it more properly, which he has so thoroughly made his



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own." *Advertisement.* This excellent publication has been attributed by some to Dr. Gillies, by others to Mr. Callander.

XLII. *Paradise Lost*, in twelve books. 8vo. Glasgow, 1750.

XLIII. *Paradise Lost*, 2 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1750. Newton's edition.

XLIV. *Paradise Lost*, in 2 vols. small 8vo. With Notes. By John Marchant, Gent. Lond. 1751.

XLV. *Paradise Regained*, *Samson*, and the *Smaller Poems*, with Notes of Various Authors, by Dr. Newton, in one vol. 4to. Lond. 1752.

XLVI. *The Poetical Works*, 2 vols. 8vo. Dubl. 1752.

XLVII. The same, in 2 vols. 8vo. With a Glossary. Edinburgh. 1752.

XLVIII. *Paradise Regained.* With the other *Poetical Works*. [smaller Poems.] Compared with the best editions, and revised by John Hawkey, editor of the *Latin Classics*. 8vo. Dubl. 1752.

XLVIII. \* The same, 18mo. Glasgow, 1752.

XLIX. *The Poetical Works*, 2 vols. 12mo. London, 1753.

L. *The Poetical Works*, by Dr. Newton, in 4 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1753.

LI. The same, in 3 vols. 4to. 1754.

LII. *The Poetical Works*, in 2 vols. small 8vo. With a Critique upon *Paradise Lost* by Mr. Addison, and a Preface in which are inserted characters of the several pieces: With a Glossary, and the *Life of Milton*. Edinburgh, 1755.

LII. \* The same, 4 vols. 8vo. 1757. Newton's edit.

LIII. *The Poetical Works*, in 2 vols. large 8vo. Printed at Birmingham by Baskerville, in 1758.

LIV. The same, by Baskerville, in 2 vols. 4to. 1759.

LV. The same, by Baskerville, in 2 vols. 8vo. 1760. It is almost superfluous to say of Baskerville's editions that they are beautifully printed. They are now become scarce.

LVI. *Paradise Lost*, Lond. Printed for Griffiths, 1760. 12mo.

LVII. *The Poetical Works*, 4 vols. 8vo. 1763. Newton's edit.

LVIII. *Paradise Lost*, edited by the famous John Wesley, M. A.



and “ curtailed of its fair proportion,” but with a very good intention, for the following reasons. “ Of all the poems which have hitherto appeared in the world, in whatever age or nation, the preference has generally been given, by impartial judges, to Milton’s *Paradise Lost*. But this inimitable work, amidst all its beauties, is unintelligible to abundance of readers: The immense learning, which he has every where crowded together, making it quite obscure to persons of a common education.

“ This difficulty, almost insuperable as it appears, I have endeavoured to remove in the following Extract: First, By omitting those lines, which I despaired of explaining to the unlearned, without using abundance of words: And, Secondly, by adding short and easy notes, such as I trust will make the main of this excellent poem clear, and intelligible, to any uneducated person of a tolerable understanding.” *To the Reader.* 1763. 12mo.

LIX. The Poetical Works, 4 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1766. Newton’s edit.

LX. *Paradise Lost*, with Notes of Various Authors, by John Rice, 8vo. Lond. 1766.

LXI. The same, 4 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1770. Newton’s edit.

LXII. *Paradise Lost*, folio. Glasgow. 1770.

LXIII. *Paradise Lost*, 12mo. Lond. 1770.

LXIV. *Par. Regained*, *Samson*, &c. 12mo. Edinb. 1770.

LXV. The Poetical Works, with a Life, and a Glossary, in 2 vols. small 8vo. Edinb. 1772.

LXVI. The first six books of *Paradise Lost*, rendered into grammatical construction: the words of the text being arranged, at the bottom of each page, in the same natural order with the conceptions of the mind; and the ellipsis properly supplied, without any alteration in the diction of the poem. With Notes, &c. By the late James Buchanan, Author of the *British Grammar*, &c. The manuscript was left with Dr. James Robertson, Professor of Hebrew, who has published it for the benefit of Mr. Buchanan’s widow. 8vo. Edinburgh. 1773.



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- LXVI. \* The Poetical Works, 4 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1773.  
Newton's edit.
- LXVII. The same, 4 vols. 12mo. Lond. 1773.
- LXVIII. Par. Regained, Samson, &c. 12mo. Lond. 1773.
- LXIX. The Poetical Works, 4 vols. 12mo. Edinb. 1773.
- LXX. Paradise Lost, and Paradise Regained, in 2 vols. small 8vo. with Notes, translated from the French of the learned Raymond de St. Maur: and various critical remarks from Mr. Addison, Dr. Warburton, Dr. Newton, Dr. Pearce, Dr. Bentley, Mr. Richardson, and Mr. Hume. *A new edition.* Lond. 1775.
- LXXI. The same, 3 vols. 4to. Lond. 1775. Newton's edit.
- LXXII. The same, 4 vols. 12mo. London, printed for Bell. 1776.
- LXXIII. Paradise Lost, 18mo. Glasgow, Foulis. 1776.
- LXXIV. The same, 12mo. Lond. 1778.
- LXXV. The Poetical Works, 4 vols 8vo. Lond. 1778.  
Newton's edit.
- LXXVI. The Poetical Works, 2 vols. 12mo. Lond. 1778.
- LXXVII. The Poetical Works, in Johnson's edit. of the Poets of Gr. Brit. 3 vols. small 8vo. 1779.
- LXXVIII. The same, 2 vols. 12mo. Edinb. 1779.
- LXXIX. The same, 3 vols. 18mo. Lond. Printed for Wenman, 1781.
- LXXX. Paradise Lost, 12mo. Lond. 1784.
- LXXXI. Poems, &c. viz. Lycidas, L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, Arcades, Comus, Odes, Sonnets, Miscellanies, English Psalms, Elegiarum Liber, Epigrammatum Liber, Silvarum Liber. With Notes critical and explanatory, and other Illustrations. By Thomas Warton, Fellow of Trinity College, and late Professor of Poetry at Oxford. 8vo. Lond. 1785.
- LXXXII. The Poetical Works, 2 vols. 12mo. Lond. 1785.
- LXXXIII. Paradise Regained, 12mo. Lond. 1785.
- LXXXIV. Paradise Lost, illustrated with Texts of Scripture, by John Gillies, D.D. One of the Ministers in Glasgow. Small 8vo. Lond. 1788.



- lxxxv. The Poetical Works, 4 vols. 12mo. Lond. 1788. Bell.
- lxxxvi. Paradise Lost, 12mo. Lond. Vernor. 1789.
- lxxxvii. The same, 2 vols. 18mo. Lond. 1790.
- lxxxviii. The same, 4 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1790. Newton's.
- lxxxix. Poems, &c. viz. Lycidas, [as before] the second edition by Mr. Warton, with many alterations and large additions. 8vo. Lond. 1791.
- xc. Paradise Lost, printed from the first and second editions collated. The original system of orthography restored; the punctuation corrected and extended. With Various Readings: And Notes; chiefly rhythmical. By Capel Lofft, Esq; Book the first. Bury St. Edmund's. 1792. Small quarto, of nearly the same size as the first edition. A learned Preface, and an Appendix, are prefixed to this book. The second Book has been also published.
- xc. Paradise Lost, 2d edit. by Dr. Gillies, with additions. Small 8vo. Lond. 1793.
- xcii. The Poetical Works, 2 vols. 12mo. Lond. 1794. Wilkin.
- xciii. The same, 3 vols. 12mo. with Newton's Notes. 1795.
- xciv. Paradise Regained. With Notes of Various Authors. By Charles Dunster, M.A. 4to. Lond. 1795.
- xcv. The Poetical Works, in Dr. Anderson's British Poets, royal 8vo. Lond. 1795.
- xcvi. The same, in Cooke's Select British Poets, with a Life of Milton, and Mr. Addison's Criticism on the Paradise Lost, 4 vols. 12mo. 1795.
- xcvii. The same, in 2 vols. 8vo, elegantly printed by Bensley. Lond. 1796.
- xcviii. Paradise Regained, Samson, and the Smaller Poems, with select Notes from Dr. Newton's, and Mr. Dunster's, editions. Lond. 8vo. 1797.
- xcix. The Poetical Works, with an excellent Life of the Author, by William Hayley, Esq. In three folio volumes. Boydell and Nicol. 1794—1797. This magnificent edition does honour to the taste and abilities of those who



were engaged in the production of it. It displays every elegance of typographical execution; and is accompanied with most beautiful engravings from the designs of Westall. It is a monument indeed worthy of HIM, whose works entitle him to that supereminence among the poets of his country, which he has so happily assigned to his own glorious "Isle" among the "sea-girt" domains of Neptune;

"THE GREATEST AND THE BEST of all the main."

*Comus*, v. 28.

- c. *Comus*, A Mask &c. With Notes critical and explanatory by various commentators, and with preliminary illustrations. To which is added a copy of the Mask from a Manuscript belonging to his Grace the Duke of Bridgewater. By the editor of these volumes. 8vo. Canterbury, 1798.
- ci. *Comus*, A Mask &c. To which are added L'Allegro and Il Penferoso, and Mr. Warton's Account of the Origin of *Comus*, [and the Account of Ludlow Castle, with some criticisms on the poem, taken from the preceding edition,] Lond. small 8vo. 1799.
- cii. *Paradise Lost*, beautifully printed, with plates by Richter, 4to. Lond. 1799.
- ciii. *Paradise Lost*, to which is prefixed the celebrated Critique by Samuel Johnson, LL. D. with a Sketch of the Life and Writings of Milton, by the Rev. John Evans, A. M. And with Engravings, royal 8vo. Lond. 1799.
- civ. *The Poetical Works*, in 4 vols. With a Critical Essay, by J. Aikin, M. D. small 8vo. Lond. 1801.

### *Greek Translations.*

- i. In 1736, the celebrated Richard Dawes published proposals for printing, by subscription, "*Paradisi Amiffi, à cl. Milono conscripti, Liber primus, Græcâ versione donatus, unâ cum annotationibus.*" These proposals were accom-



panied with a specimen, which may be seen in the seventh volume of *The General Dictionary*, p. 587, and in the Preface to his *Miscellanea Critica*, where he explains his reasons for not proceeding in his undertaking, and very ingenuously points out the errors of his own performance. See Biograph. Brit. vol. 5. edit. Kippis, p. 20.

II. *Paradisi Amissi Liber primus Græcè, cum celebri versione Latinâ Rev. Gulielmi Dobson, Oxoniensis, nuper defuncti.* [Dedicated by the translator, Dr. Stratford, to the present bishop of Derry.] Dublin, 4to. 1770.

III. In the Gentleman's Magazine for 1779, p. 191, the following mention is made of a Greek translation by "Thomas Denny, a literary itinerant, particularly skilled in Greek. Among the Roman poets, Horace and Virgil were his chief favourites, as Homer was of the Greek, whose style he has well imitated in a translation of the first six books of Milton's *Paradise Lost* into Greek; which, with a great number of detached pieces on various subjects, in that and Latin, were preserved by several gentlemen of his acquaintance."

IV. *Johannis Miltoni Samson Agonistes Græco carmine redditus cum versione Latinâ. A Georgio Henrico Glasse, A. M. Ædis Christi nuper Alumno.* Oxon. 8vo. 1788.

V. In the Gentleman's Magazine for 1791, p. 471, a specimen of a Greek translation, dated Hertford, May 11, 1791. by James Moore, Master of the Grammar School, is offered to the publick; according to which specimen, "I purpose," says Mr. Moore, "publishing Milton's *Paradise Lost*."

VI. *Miltonis Poema, Lycidas, Græcè redditum.* [A— Plumptre, Canonico Vigornienfi.] 4to. 1797.

### *Latin Translations.*

I. *Johannis Miltoni Paradisi Amissi Liber primus, ex Anglicanâ linguâ in Latinam conversus.* 4to. Cantabrigiæ, 1691. The dedication is signed by T. P., who is said to be Thomas



Power, of Trin. Coll. Cambridge. He translated into Latin verse the remaining books, which exist in manuscript. See Peck's *Memoirs of Milton*, p. 68.

- II. *Paraphrasis Poetica in tria Johannis Miltoni, viri clarissimi, Poemata, viz. Paradisum Amissum, Paradisum Recuperatum, et Samsonem Agonisten. Autore Gulielmo Hogæo.* 8vo. Lond. 1690. And at Rotterdam, 1699.

From the dedications of this ingenious and learned Scotchman, prefixed to his translations of *Lycidas* and *Comus*, we learn that he experienced great distress. He had published in 1682 "*Paraphrasis in Jobum Poetica*;" and afterwards "*Satyra Sacra, sive Paraphrasis in Ecclesiasten Poetica*." To this publication he has prefixed a poetical account of himself. He appears to have been a native of Gowry in Perthshire, and to have known only misfortune since he came into England. He published also "*Liber primus Principis Arcturi* (à Rich. Blackmore, Eq. Aur.) *Latinè red.* 1700," and several other Latin versions of English poems. Of a person, who had thus contributed to extend the fame of Milton, these few notices may not seem improper. I wish I could add that his declining days were comfortable. Part of his sacred poetry has been reprinted in "*Poetarum Scotorum Musæ Sacræ*, 2 tom. Edinb. 1739:" of which William Lauder is the editor. Of his *Paradise Lost* Lauder basely availed himself. See vol. vi. p. 408.

- III. *Paraphrasis Latina in duo Poemata, (quorum alterum à Miltono, alterum à Clievlando, Anglicè scriptum fuit,) quibus deploratur mors juvenis præclari et eruditi, D. Edwardi King, qui nave, quâ vectabatur, saxo illisa, in Oceano Hybernico submersus est. Autore Gulielmo Hogæo.* London, printed for the author. 4to. 1694.—I am also possessed of an ancient Latin translation of *Lycidas* in manuscript.

- IV. *Lusus Amatorius; sive Musæi Poema &c. Cui aliæ (tres scilicet) accedunt nugæ poeticæ.* The first of these "*nugæ poeticæ*" is *Fragmentum libri quinti Poematis*



- verè Divini quod Paradisus Amiffa infcribitur, &c. 4to. Lond. 1694. Peck was mifinformed by Dr. Birch in dating this publication 1699.
- v. Comœdia Joannis Miltoni, viri clariffimi, (quæ agebatur in Arce Ludenfi,) paraphrafticè reddita, à Gulielmo Hogæo. 4to. Lond. 1698.
- vi. Paradisus Amiffa. Poema Anglicè fcriptum à Johanne Milton. Nunc autem ex Auctoris exemplari Latinè redditum. Per M. B[old, Aul. Trin. Cantab. Soc.] Liber primus. 8vo. Lond. 1702. The tranflator printed two other title-pages: viz. "Paradisus Amiffa. Poema, Latino carmine redditum ex ipfo) Authore Johanne Milton. Lib. prim. Lond. 1702." And "Paradisus Amiffa Miltonia, Lat. carmine reddita. Lib. prim. *Operis totius fpecimen*. Lond. 1717." Reprinted in 4to. 1736.
- vii. Peck relates that, in 1709, he was informed at Corpus Chrifti College, Oxford, that Dr. William Tilly, a learned fellow of that fociety, had tranflated a great part of the Paradife Loft into Latin verfe. See Mem. of Milton, p. 69.
- viii. In Dodfley's Publick Register for 1741, p. 85, there is a tranflation from Il Penferofo into Latin hexameters, figned W. R.; and a fecond, from the fame poem, into elegiacks, by the fame perfon, in p. 86.
- ix. Miltoni Paradisus Amiffus, 2 vols. 4to. Dr. Trapp's tranflation. Vol. 1ft. 1740, vol. 2d. 1744.
- x. The beginning of the firft book of Paradife Loft tranflated into Latin hexameters, by Mr. Samuel Say. Poems, 4to. Lond. 1745.
- xi. The fame, by L. de Bonneval, Gent. Mag. 1746, p. 548. The fame number of lines is alfo extracted from the verfions of Power, Bold, and Trapp, with the addition of another tranflation, figned I. C. p. 661.
- xii. Tranflations from Comus in the Carmina Quadragefimalia, Oxon. 1748, vol. ii. pp. 25, 73.
- xiii. A Latin verfion of L'Allegro, by Christopher Smart, Poems, p. 181. edit. 4to. 1752.



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- xiv. *Paradisus Amiffus Poema Joannis Miltoni, Latinè red-  
ditum à Gulielmo Dobson, LL. B.* Nov. Coll. Oxon,  
Socio. 2 vols. 4to. 1753. This admirable translation was  
encouraged by Mr. Benson, who had erected in West-  
minster Abbey the monument to the poet. Oldys, in his  
manuscript notes on Langbaine's Dramatick poets, pre-  
served in the British Museum, says that Dobson's reward  
was to be a thousand pounds when the translation should  
be finished, with the interest of that sum while he was  
performing it.
- xv. *Imitata à Miltoni L' Allegro Carmina.* Dated Lichfield,  
Nov. 1, 1794. *Gent. Mag.* vol. 64, p. 1134.

### *Italian Translations.*

- i. The celebrated Mr. Berkeley, afterwards bishop of Cloyne,  
had been informed in 1714, that, at Florence, Milton was  
then translated into Italian verse. See *Mem. of bishop  
Berkeley*, 2d edit. p. 54. The younger Richardson had  
also seen at Florence an Italian translation of *Paradise Lost*  
in manuscript by the Abbé Salvini, who, in 1715, pub-  
lished an Italian version of Addison's *Cato*. Whether this  
might be the translation, of which information had been  
given to Mr. Berkeley; or whether a translation of Mil-  
ton's other Poems also had been made, cannot now be  
known. Wright, in his *Travels through France, Italy,  
&c.* in 1720, 1721, and 1722, notices Salvini's translation  
of *Cato*, which, he says, "Mr. Addison himself declared  
was the best translation he ever saw." And he adds, Sal-  
vini "shewed us some parts of Milton's *Paradise Lost*,  
which he had occasionally turned into Italian; and they  
read admirably well in that harmonious language." *Tra-  
vels, &c.* vol. ii. p. 425. Salvini's translation has not  
been published. The learned Abbé was extremely fond of  
English literature. He thus declares his love, in a letter to  
a friend, dated Nov. 18. 1713. "Or che pensate? ulti-



mamente mi sono addato all' Inglese, e mi diletta, e mi giova assaiissimo. E gl' Inglesi, essendo nazione pensativa, inventiva, bizzarra, libera, e franca, io ci trovo ne' loro libri di grande vivacità, e spirito, e la Greca, e l' altre lingue molto mi conferiscono a tenere a mente i loro vocaboli per via d' etimologie, e di similitudini di suoni." Lettere d' Uomini illustri, Venez. 4to. 1735, p. 167. It appears that Salvini translated also *The Fair Penitent*, and *Jane Shore*, into Italian. Ibid, p. 322.

II. Del Paradiso Perduto Poema Inglese di Giovanni Milton Traduzione di Paolo Rolli. Londra, fol. 1735.

III. Il Paradiso Perduto di Giovanni Milton, tradotto in Verso Italiano da Felice Mariottini. With the Life of Milton, and Mr. Addison's Criticism; to both which, additions are subjoined: And with copious annotations. The first book only. Lond. 8vo. 1794.

IV. Il Paradiso Perduto di Giovanni Milton, tradotto in Verso Italiano da Felici Mariottini. [The whole Poem, in 2 parts.] Lond. 8vo. 1796.

V. Mr. Walker, in his Hist. Memoir on Italian Tragedy, 1799, p. 229, relates that the learned Antonio Conti, a Venetian nobleman, who, with the assistance of Lord Bolingbroke, had made a free version of the whole of Pope's Rape of the Lock, had translated part of Milton's Paradise Lost; which, however, is supposed not to have been published.

VI. The learned world will hear with pleasure, that Signor Polidori is at present employed in translating Comus into Italian; with a copious and elegant specimen of which I have been lately favoured by my friend, Mr. Walker.

### *French Translations.*

I. Voltaire, in a letter to Horace Walpole, dated 15 July, 1768, says, "I was the first that introduced Shakspeare



to the French ; *forty years ago* I translated some passages from him, as well as from Milton, Waller, &c. See Hist. Memoirs of Voltaire, Lond. 8vo. 1777, p. 208.

II. Le Paradis Perdu, &c. Avec les remarques de M. Addison. Par Monf. Dupré de St. Maur. In prose. 3 vols. 12mo. Paris, in 1729.

III. Le Paradis Perdu, Le Par. Reconquis, Lycidas, Il Pensero, et Cantique sur la fête de Noel, &c. 3 vols. 12mo. Hag. 1730. To this edition are added Dissertation critique de M. Constantin de Magny, which is thought by some to have been written by the Abbe Pellegrin, and La Chûte de l'Homme, poeme François par M. Durand. Several passages are restored in this edition, which in that of Paris had been retrenched.

IV. Traduction du Paradis Perdu, chargée de Notes. Par Louis Racine, en 3 vols. 8vo. " Elle est, en quelques endroits, plus fidele que celle de M. Dupré de St. Maur ; mais on n'y sent point, comme dans celle-ci, l'enthousiasme de l'Homère Anglois." Vid. Nouv. Dict. Hist. à Caen, *Racine*, (Louis.)

V. L'Allegro et Le Pensieroso de Milton. Traduit en vers François. Par Ribouville. 4to. Lond. 1766.

VI. M. de Beaulaton a fait paroître, en 1777 et 1778, une traduction en vers François de Paradis Perdu, laquelle offre des beautés et des défauts. See Nouv. Dict. Hist. à Caen, *Milton*, (Jean.)

VII. Le Paradis Perdu, &c. de St. Maur's edit. 3 vols. 18mo. Geneve, 1777.

VIII. Le Même, 3 vols. 8vo. Paris, 1782. To this edition, besides the Lettres Critiques sur le Paradis Perdu, et sur le Paradis Reconquis, are added several Notes on the text.

IX. Le Pere de Mareuil, Jésuite, a donné une traduction Française, in 12mo. de Paradis Reconquis. See Nouv. Dict. à Caen, *Milton*, (Jean.)

X. Le Paradis Perdu, &c. 2 vols, large quarto, with fine engravings. A magnificent edition. Printed at Paris, 1792.



- xI. The celebrated Abbé de Lille, it has lately been said, has undertaken to translate the *Paradise Lost*. See *The Times*, January 6, 1801.

### *Dutch and German Translations.*

- i. Milton Paradys Valooren, 4to. Harlem, 1728. In Dutch blank verse. This is presumed to be the translation by Mr. Theodore Haake, R. S. S., which, Aubrey says, was highly approved by Fabricius.
- ii. Milton's wiedereroberetes Paradies, 8vo. Basil, 1752.
- iii. ——— verlohrenes Paradies, von Zacharia, 2 bände, 8vo. Altona, 1762.
- iv. Dasselbe, von Bodmer. Zurich, 1769.
- v. Dasselbe, von Bodmer, 2 bände, 8vo. Zurich, 1780. This excellent German poet has also given a critical analysis of the *Paradise Lost*. Of the high esteem, in which the poetry of Milton was held by Bodmer, and also by Klopstock, see proofs in “*Caracteres des poëtes les plus distingués de l'Allemagne*. Par M. Pfenninguer. Zurich, 1789.”
- vi. Milton's Allegro und Penferoso, 8vo. Enriched with beautiful head and tail-pieces. Germ. and Eng. Mannheim, 1782.
- vii. ——— wiedereroberetes Paradies, nebst seinem leben, anch dramat. und fleinen neuern Gedichten. 8vo. Dessau, 1782.
- viii. ——— verl. Paradies, übers. v. Bürde, 2 Thle, 8vo. Berlin, 1793.

### *Portuguese Translations.*

- i. Paraíso perdido, poëma heroico de J. Milton, traduzido em vulgar pelo P. José Amaro da Silva, Presbitere Vima-  
rense. Com o Paraíso restaurado do mesmo author.  
(With short Notes, and Mr. Addison's Criticism.) Em  
Lisboa, 2 vols. 8vo. 1792.



*English Translations.*

- I. The Latin Epigram on Salmasius, by Mr. Washington, 1692. See vol. vi. p. 256.
- II. The Latin Verses to Christina in Toland's Life of Milton, 1698. See vol. vi. p. 271. They have lately been translated also in the Monthly Magazine.
- III. Milton's Italian Poems, translated and addressed to a Gentleman of Italy. By Dr. J. Langhorne, 4to. 1776.
- IV. Manfo ; from the Latin of Milton ; in English heroicks. In Poems by the Rev. Joseph Sterling, Lond. 8vo. 1789.
- V. Several admirable translations from the Italian and Latin poems, by William Cowper, Esq. In Mr. Hayley's Life of Milton, 1794.

*Alterations of Milton.*

- I. The State of Innocence, or, The Fall of Man. An opera, in rhyme, by Dryden. 4to. 1674.
- II. Milton's Paradise Lost imitated in rhyme. In the fourth, sixth, and ninth books ; containing The Primitive Loves, The Battel of the Angels, The Fall of Man. By Mr. John Hopkins. Lond. 8vo. 1699. This rhymist opens his Preface thus : " It has been the misfortune of *one of my name* to affront the sacred prose of David with intolerable rhyme ; and 'tis mine, I fear, to have abus'd almost as sacred verse !" — I am clearly of opinion, from a perusal of these rhymes, that John Hopkins is a true descendant of the *original John Hopkins*, and the worthy heir of his poetical fame. He was partly induced *to put Milton into rhyme*, according to his intimation in the Preface, in order *to oblige the ladies* !
- III. A Paraphrase in verse, on part of the first book of Milton's Paradise Lost, by W. Howard. 4to. London. Printed for the author, 1738. The title-page was varied. For the author, an aged and infirm man, in order to relieve his wants, circulated his paraphrase by printing on every title-page an address to some distinguished person. My copy is inscribed to the Dutchess of Bolton.



- iv. *Comus*, a Mask. Now adapted to the Stage. As altered from Milton's Mask. By Dr. Dalton. Lond. 8vo. 1738. This judicious and elegant alteration has been often reprinted. It was received with the highest applause on its first representation. The Songs were set to musick by Dr. Arne.
- v. *Le Paradis Terrestre*. Imité de Milton. Divertissement spirituel en un Acte. Exécuté par l'Academie de Musique de Poitiers, le 23 de Mars 1736. See *Oeuvres Mêlées* de M. l'Abbé Nadal, Paris. 1738.
- vi. *L'Allegro* and *Il Penferoso*, with a third part, entitled *Moderation*, adapted to Handel's Musick, 1739.
- vii. *Par. Lost*, attempted in rhyme, Book i. 8vo. Lond. 1740. By A. Jackson, Bookseller in Clare-Court, Drury Lane.
- viii. *Samson*, altered, with the admission of many passages from Milton's early poems, and adapted to Handel's Musick, 1742.
- ix. *The State of Innocence, and Fall of Man: Described in Milton's Par. Lost*. Render'd into prose. With Notes &c. From the French of Raymond de St. Maur. By a Gentleman of Oxford. Lond. Printed for Osborne, 1745. 8vo. Mr. Steevens ridicules Osborne for this publication, as being ignorant in what form or language our *Paradise Lost* was written. *Shakspeare*, vol. i. p. 72. edit. 1793.
- x. *Le Paradis Terrestre*. Poeme Imité de Milton, en vi chants. Par Madame du Bocage. 8vo. Lond. 1748.
- xi. There is, in French also, *La Christiade ou Le Paradis Reconquis*, pour servir de suite au *Paradis Perdu* de Milton. With a large *Discours Preliminaire*. In six volumes, à Bruxelles, (or rather at Paris,) 1753.
- xii. *A New Version of Paradise Lost, &c.* In which the measure and versification are corrected and harmonised; the obscurities elucidated; and the faults, which the author stands accused of by Addison and other of the criticks, are removed. With annotations on the original text, to shew the reasonableness of this new Version!! By a Gen-



tleman of Oxford. 8vo. 1756. The name of this doughty reformer, shrouding himself under a fictitious title, was Green. See Farmer's Essay on the Learning of Shakspeare, 3d edit. p. 27. Of this *New Version* only the first book appeared. The performance indeed is a most striking example of vanity and absurdity united.

xiii. Tanevot, a learned Frenchman, has been supposed to be indebted to Milton in his tragedy of Adam and Eve, which is published with his other works in 1765. See *Nouv. Dict. Hist. à Caen. Tanevot, (Alexandre.)*

xiv. Comus, A Mask. Altered from Milton. By George Colman, Esq. 8vo. 1772. This alteration also has been frequently reprinted, and is the Comus which now preserves its place upon the Stage.

xv. Adam, or The Fatal Disobedience. An Oratorio. In Poems of R. Jago. Lond. 1784.

xvi. Le Paradis Reconquis: Poëme, imité de Milton, par L. R. Lafaye, Gradué en l' Université de Paris, Maître de Langue Française, en vi chants. 12mo. Lond. 1789.

*Detached Pieces of Criticism relating to Milton,  
his editors, &c.*

Annotations on Milton's Paradise Lost. Wherein the texts of Sacred Writ, relating to the poem, are quoted; the parallel places and imitations of the most excellent Homer, and Virgil, cited and compared; all the obscure parts render'd in phrases more familiar; the old and obsolete words, with their Originals, explain'd and made easie to the English reader. By P[atrick] H[ume.] Φιλοποιήτης. Lond. Fol. 1695. [Usually, but not always, subjoined to Tonson's edit. of 1695.]

Milton's Sublimity asserted, Lond. 8vo. 1709.

Addison's Criticism on the Paradise Lost, [Separately printed.] 12mo. Lond. Printed for Tonson, 1719.



Voltaire's Essay on the epick poetry of the European nations, from Homer down to Milton, Lond. 8vo. 1727.

Milton restor'd, and Bentley depos'd, Lond. 8vo. 1732.

A friendly Letter to Dr. Bentley. Occasion'd by his new edition of Paradise Lost. By a Gentleman of Christ-Church College, Oxon. Lond. 8vo. 1732. [The author said to be Dr. Pearce.]

A Review of the Text of the twelve books of Par. Lost, in which the chief of Dr. Bentley's emendations are consider'd, &c. [First printed in separate parts.] Lond. 1732. [Complete.] Lond. 8vo. 1733. [By Dr. Pearce.]

Critical Dissertation on Paradise Regained, by the Rev. Mr. Meadowcourt, Prebendary of Worcester. Lond. 8vo. 1732. Reprinted in 1748.

Explanatory Notes and Remarks on Paradise Lost. By J. Richardson, Father and Son. With the Life of the Author, and a Discourse on the Poem. By J. R. Sen. Lond. 8vo. 1734.

Remarks on Spenser's Poems, and on Milton, Lond. 8vo. 1734. [By Dr. Jortin.]

Remarks on the three first books of Par. Lost, by Mr. Warburton, in the Works of the Learned, 1739, &c.

Letters concerning Poetical Translations, and Virgil's and Milton's Arts of Verse, &c. Lond. 8vo. 1739. [By William Benson, Esq.]

Explanatory and Critical Notes on divers passages of Milton and Shakspeare, with an examination of Milton's stile, by Francis Peck, M. A. Printed with his "New Memoirs of the Life &c. of Milton." 4to. 1740.

Essay on Milton's imitation of the Ancients, 8vo. 1741.

A Complete Commentary, with etymological, explanatory, critical, and classical Notes on Par. Lost. By James Paterson, M. A., and Philologist. Lond. 8vo. 1744.

Essay on the Numbers of Par. Lost. By Mr. Samuel Say. Printed with his Poems, 4to. 1745.

Lauder's attack against Milton, in the Gentleman's Magazine for January 1746-7, &c.



Zoilomastix: or A Vindication of Milton from all the invidious charges of Mr. William Lauder. With some new Remarks on Paradise Lost. By R. Richardson, B. A. late of Clare-Hall, Cambridge. 8vo. 1747.

Furius: or a modest Attempt towards an history of the life and surprizing exploits of the famous W[illiam] L[auder], Critick and Thief-Catcher, 8vo. 1748. [Said to be written by Mr. Henderson, a bookseller.]

An Essay on Milton's use and imitation of the Moderns, in his Par. Lost. By William Lauder. Lond. 8vo. 1750. [With a Preface by Dr. Johnson.]

Pandæmonium: Or a New infernal Expedition, inscribed to a Being who calls himself William Lauder, 4to. 1750.

Milton vindicated from the charge of Plagiarism, brought against him by Mr. Lauder, and Lauder himself convicted of several Forgeries and Impositions on the Publick. By John Douglas, M. A. Rector of Eton Constantine, Salop. [Now Lord Bishop of Salisbury.] 8vo. 1750.

The Preface to the Sea-Piece, a Poem, [containing a defence of Milton against Lauder.] By J. Kirkpatrick, M. D. 8vo. Lond. 1750.

Criticism on Samson Agonistes, in The Rambler, No. 139, 140. [Dr. Johnson.] 1750.

Criticism on the Versification of Milton, in The same, No. 86, &c.

A Letter to the Rev. Mr. Douglas, occasioned by his Vindication of Milton, &c. By William Lauder, A. M. 4to. 1751. [Written by Dr. Johnson.]

An Apology for Mr. Lauder. In a Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury. 8vo. 1751.

Criticism on Blemishes in the Paradise Lost, in The Adventurer, N<sup>o</sup> 101. [Dr. J. Warton.] 1752.

King Charles I. vindicated from the charge of Plagiarism, brought against him by Milton, and Milton himself convicted of Forgery, and a gross Imposition on the Publick, &c. By W. Lauder, 8vo. 1754. [Of this impudent pamphlet, the title of which is a parody on Mr. Douglas's



Vindication of Milton, see an account in *The Inquiry into the Origin of Par. Lost*, in this vol. p. 273.]

Milton no Plagiary: or A Detection of the Forgeries contained in Lauder's Essay &c. By J. Douglas, &c. [As before, 2d edit. enlarged.] 8vo. 1756.

Remarks upon Paradise Lost, historical, geographical, philological, critical, and explanatory. By W. Maffey. 12mo. 1761.

Il Taffo, a Dialogue: the Speakers John Milton, and Torquato Taffo. In which new light is thrown on their poetical and moral characters. 8vo. 1761.

A familiar Explanation of the Poetical Works of Milton. To which is prefixed Mr. Addison's Criticism on Par. Lost. With a Preface. By the Rev. Mr. Dodd. Lond. 12mo. 1762.

Prefaces Biographical and Critical to the works of the most eminent English poets, by Dr. Johnson, 1781.

Criticism on Paradise Lost, by Dr. Blair, in his Lectures on Rhetorick &c. 4to. 1783.

Criticism on Samson Agonistes, in refutation of the censures of Dr. Johnson, by Mr. Cumberland, in The Observer, 8vo. 1784.

A Letter to the Rev. Mr. T. Warton, on his late Edition of Milton's Juvenile Poems. [Said to be written by Samuel Derby, M.A. Rector of Whatefield in Suffolk.] Lond. 8vo. 1785.

Critical Essay on Lycidas, By John Scott, Esq. Printed with his "Critical Essays on some of the Poems of several English poets." Lond. 8vo. 1785.

Imitations and accidental Resemblances of Milton, by T. H. W. (Thomas Holt White) Gent. Mag. 1786, 1787.

Miscellaneous Remarks on Milton, by T. C. O. [the late ingenious and amiable Mr. Headley of Trinity College, Oxford.] Gent. Mag. 1786, 1787.

Criticism on Samson Agonistes, in refutation of the censures of Dr. Johnson. [By the late W. J. Mickle, Esq.] Europ. Mag. 1788.



Curfory Remarks on fome of the ancient English poets, particularly Milton. [By Philip Neve, Efq.] 8vo. 1789.

Remarks on the Greek Verfes of Milton, by Dr. Charles Burney, 1790.

Conjectures on the Origin of Paradise Loft, by William Hayley, Efq. Printed in his 2d edit. of the Life of Milton, 4to. 1796.

The Similies of Homer, Virgil, and Milton, examined and compared, by J. A. Monthly Mag. 1796, 1797, 1798.

On Milton's Imitations, or Refemblances, in Par. Loft, by the Rev. G. Wakefield. Monthly Mag. 1797, 1798.

Preliminary Obfervations on Samfon Agoniftes, as adapted to the Stage, in Critical, Poetical, and Dramatick Works, by John Penn, Efq. 8vo. Lond. 1798.

Thoughts on the Origin of Paradise Loft. By Jofeph Cooper Walker, Efq. Printed with his "Historical Memoir on Italian Tragedy," 4to. 1799.

Confiderations on Milton's early reading, and the prima ftamina of his Par. Loft; together with extracts from a poet of the fixteenth century, [Jefhua Sylvefter.] In a Letter to William Falconer, M. D., from Charles Dunfter, M. A. 8vo. Lond. 1800.



## APPENDIX

TO THE

## LIFE OF MILTON.

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IT is related by Mr. Warton, that, "in the University Statutes at Oxford, compiled in 1635, ten years after Milton's admission at Cambridge, corporal punishment is to be inflicted on boys *under sixteen*. We are to recollect, that Milton, when he went to Cambridge, was only a boy of *fifteen*." See the Life, p. xi. But Milton was in his *seventeenth year*, when he was admitted at Christ's College. See the Life, p. viii. And if the same exemption was granted to boys of *sixteen* at Cambridge, as to those of the same age at Oxford, the flagellation of Milton becomes still less entitled to credit. One of the statutes of Christ's College, entitled Cap. 37. *De Lectoris Auctoritate in Discipulos*, seems to countenance the supposition of similar exemption: After prescribing that they, who absent themselves from certain Lectures, shall be *fined*, the Statute subjoins the following reservation; "*si tamen adultus fuerit; alioquin, virgâ corrigatur.*"

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In the note °, p. xlii, for *Spinſtow*, read *Spurſtow*.

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The spirited lines of Dr. George, mentioned in p. cxxxvii, and referred to in the sixth volume, have been also ascribed, as I have been informed, to the Hon. Thomas Townshend, father of the late Lord Sidney.



## APPENDIX TO THE LIFE OF MILTON. ccxv

The verses, said to be written by Mr. Keith, and noticed in the same page, as well as in the sixth volume, occur in the edition of Vincent Bourne's Poems, printed in 1772. In an earlier edition of Bourne, which I have seen, they are not, however, to be found.

To the modern engravings of the poet, mentioned in this and the following pages, may be added an interesting one by Mr. Silvester Harding from a painting in the possession of the late Lord Orford.



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TO THE  
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1805



PROLEGOMENA, &c.

VOL. I.

B







# COMMENDATORY VERSES

ON

MILTON.

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*In Paradisum Amissam summi Poetae, Johannis  
Miltoni \*.*

QUI legis Amissam Paradisum, grandia magni  
Carmina MILTONI, quid nisi cuncta legis?  
Res cunctas, et cunctarum primordia rerum,  
Et fata, et fines, continet iste liber.  
Intima panduntur magni penetralia mundi, 5  
Scribitur et toto quicquid in orbe latet:  
Terræque, tractusque maris, cælumque profun-  
dum,  
Sulphureumque Erebi, flammivomumque  
specus:

\* This poem by Dr. Barrow, and the next by Milton's friend Andrew Marvell, have been usually published in the editions of *Paradise Lost*, since the edition of 1674, to which they are both prefixed.

Ver. 1. ——— Amissam *Paradisum*,] Dr. Barrow has here rendered *Paradisum* *feminine*. M. Bold, who translated the first book of *Paradise Lost*, printed in 1702, thus also entitles the poem “*Paradisus Amissa*.” See also the same title to other Latin translations in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. xvi. pp. 549, 661. The Greek and Latin writers, however, make *Paradise* *masculine*.



Quæque colunt terras, pontúmque, et Tartara  
cæca,

Quæque colunt summi lucida regna poli : 10  
Et quodcunque ullis conclusum est finibus us-  
quam,

Et fine fine Chaos, et fine fine Deus ;  
Et fine fine magis, si quid magis est fine fine,  
In Christo erga homines conciliatus amor.  
Hæc qui speraret quis crederet esse futurum ? 15  
Et tamen hæc hodiè terra Britannia legit.

O quantos in bella duces ! quæ protulit arma !

Quæ canit, et quantâ prælia dira tubâ !

Cœlestes acies ! atque in certamine cœlum !

Et quæ cœlestes pugna deceret agros ! 20

Quantus in æthereis tollit se Lucifer armis !

Atque ipso graditur vix Michaële minor !

Quantis, et quàm funestis concurritur iris,

Dum ferus hic stellas protegit, ille rapit !

Dum vulsos montes ceu tela reciproca torquent, 25

Et non mortali desuper igne pluunt :

Stat dubius cui se parti concedat Olympus,

Ver. 15. ————— *quis crederet esse futurum ?*] So I print it from the edition of 1674. Dr. Newton reads *futura*. Toland, who has printed this excellent copy of verses in his Life of Milton, reads *futurum*. Tonson's editions of 1705, and 1711, and Tickell's in 1720, read the same : But Fenton's in 1725, and Tonson's of 1727 and 1746, read *futura* ; as many other editions also read. Mr. Capel Lofft, in his edition of the First Book of Paradise Lost, 1792, has restored *futurum* ; and ingeniously explains it : " Quis crederet (nempe) *aliquem* futurum qui hæc se faciendo assequi posse speraret ? "



Et metuit pugnæ non superesse suæ.  
 At simul in cœlis Mæssia insignia fulgent,  
 Et currus animes, armâque digna Deo, 30  
 Horrendûmque rotæ strident, et sæva rotarum  
 Erumpunt torvis fulgura luminibus,  
 Et flammæ vibrant, et vera tonitrua rauco  
 Admistis flammis insonuere polo :  
 Excidit attonitis mens omnis, et impetus omnis,  
 Et cassis dextris irrita tela cadunt ; 36  
 Ad pœnas fugiunt ; et, ceu foret Orcus asylum,  
 Infernis certant condere se tenebris.  
 Cedite, Romani Scriptores ; cedite, Graii ;  
 Et quos fama recens vel celebravit anus. 40  
 Hæc quicumque leget tantûm cecinisse putabit  
 Mæonidem ranas, Virgilium culices.

SAMUEL BARROW, M. D. †

† Of Dr. Samuel Barrow, the author of these verses, no account has been given by the editors of Milton. Toland only calls him a doctor of physick. Perhaps he was the physician to the army of General Monk. See Skinner's *Life of General Monk*, 1724, p. 166. "General Monk hastened to Berwick from Coldstream, Decr. 13. 1659, being attended with some of his best Colonels, and *Dr. Barrow* the principal Physician, who about this time was made Judge Advocate of the army." See also Kennet's *Register and Chronicle*, 1728, pp. 34, 35, 133.

Of the poem I have seen two printed translations in English verse ; one, inserted in Mr. Bowle's interleaved Copy of *Paradise Lost*, apparently taken out of some magazine or periodical publication ; the other, much more distinguishable for spirit and fidelity, in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1760, p. 291, to which no signature is affixed.



*On Paradise Lost.*

WHEN I beheld the Poet blind, yet bold,  
 In slender book his vast design unfold,  
 Messiah crown'd, God's reconcil'd decree,  
 Rebelling Angels, the forbidden tree,  
 Heaven, Hell, Earth, Chaos, all; the argument  
 Held me a while misdoubting his intent, 6  
 That he would ruin (for I saw him strong)  
 The sacred truths to fable and old song;  
 (So Sampson grop'd the temple's posts in spight,)  
 The world o'erwhelming to revenge his fight. 10

Yet as I read, still growing less severe,  
 I lik'd his project, the success did fear;  
 Through that wide field how he his way should  
 find,

O'er which lame Faith leads Understanding blind;  
 Lest he'd perplex the things he would explain,  
 And what was easy he should render vain. 16

Or if a work so infinite he spann'd,  
 Jealous I was that some less skilful hand  
 (Such as disquiet always what is well,  
 And, by ill imitating, would excell,) 20  
 Might hence presume the whole creation's day  
 To change in scenes, and show it in a play.

Pardon me, mighty Poet, nor despise  
 My causeless, yet not impious, surmise.  
 But I am now convinc'd, and none will dare 25  
 Within thy labours to pretend a share.



Thou hast not mis'd one thought that could be fit,  
 And all that was improper dost omit :  
 So that no room is here for writers left,  
 But to detect their ignorance or theft. 30

That majesty, which through thy work doth  
 reign,  
 Draws the devout, deterring the profane.  
 And things divine thou treat'st of in such state  
 As them preserves, and thee, inviolate.  
 At once delight and horror on us seize, 35  
 Thou sing'st with so much gravity and ease ;  
 And above human flight dost soar aloft  
 With plume so strong, so equal, and so soft.  
 The bird, nam'd from that Paradise you sing,  
 So never flags, but always keeps on wing. 40

Where couldst thou words of such a compass  
 find ?

Whence furnish such a vast expence of mind ?  
 Just Heaven thee, like Tiresias, to requite,  
 Rewards with prophecy thy loss of sight. 44

Well might'st thou scorn thy readers to allure  
 With tinkling rhyme, of thy own sense secure ;

Ver. 42. ————— expence of mind ?] In some modern editions of Milton, *expence* has here been converted into *expanse*.

Ver. 46. *With tinkling rhyme,*] So, in Ben Jonson's *Mask, The Fortunate Isles*, a question is asked respecting Skogan, the jester :

————— " But wrote he like a gentleman ? "

The answer is,



While the Town-Bays writes all the while and  
 spells,  
 And, like a pack-horse, tires without his bells :  
 Their fancies like our bushy points appear ;  
 The poets tag them, we for fashion wear. 50  
 I too, transported by the mode, offend,  
 And, while I meant to praise thee, must commend.

“ In *rime* ! fine *tinckling rime* ! and flowand verse ! ”

Milton thus ridicules rhyme in calling it the “ *jingling sound of like endings*.”

Ver. 49. ————— *like our bushy points appear* ;

*The poets tag them,*] Richardson says, “ It was the fashion in those days to wear *much ribbon*, which some adorn’d with *tags* of metal at the end,” *Life of Milton*, p. cxx. *Points* are said to have been metal hooks, fastened to the hose or breeches, which had no opening or buttons ; and going into straps or eyes fixed to the doublet, to have thus kept the hose from falling down. See Steevens’s *Shakspeare*, edit. 1793, vol. iv. 27. And *Minshew’s Guide into Tongues*, 1627. V. *Point*.

It is related by Aubrey, in his MS. *Life of Milton*, that “ John Dryden, Esq. Poet Laureate, who very much admired him, went to him to have leave *to put his Paradise Lost into a Dramatick Poem*. Milton received him very civilly, and told him he would give him leave to *tagge* his verses.” MS. Ashmol. Mus. Oxford.

Ver. 51. *I too, transported by the mode, offend,*

*And, while I meant to praise thee, must commend.*]

This is the true reading. Fenton, in his edition of *Paradise Lost* in 1725, thought proper to transpose the rhymes ; and he has been followed by Tonson’s editions of 1727, 1730, 1738, and 1746. The error is adopted also in Vernor’s edition of 1789, and in Wilkins’s of 1794. A Dublin edition of 1748, and an Edinburgh edition of 1779, read the same.

It has been ingeniously observed, that Marvell very artfully here shows us the inconvenience of rhyme, in telling us that he



Thy verse created, like thy theme, sublime,  
In number, weight, and measure, needs not rhyme.

ANDREW MARVELL.

designed to *praise* Milton, but now can do no more than *commend* him; because he is tied down by the rhyme, and only the *worst* of these two words will answer to *offend*. See Preface to "Sighs on the death of Queen Anne, in imitation of Milton, Lond. 1719," 8vo. p. xiv.

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*To Mr. John Milton, on his Poem entitled  
Paradise Lost* \*.

O THOU! the wonder of the present age,  
An age immers'd in luxury and vice;  
A race of triflers; who can relish nought  
But the gay issue of an idle brain:  
How couldst thou hope to please this tinsel race?—  
Though blind, yet, with the penetrating eye  
Of intellectual light, thou dost survey  
The labyrinth perplex'd of Heaven's decrees;

\* These verses by F. C. are prefixed to Milton's poetical works in the *Edition of the English poets*, 1779. They had before appeared in Fawkes and Woty's *Poetical Calendar*, 1763, vol. viii. 69. But we are not told who F. C. was. As I have not yet met with these verses in any other publication, I may be permitted to offer a conjecture that Francis Cradock, a member of the Rota-Club to which Milton belonged, might be the author of them. See Wood's *Ath. Ox.* vol. ii. 591.



And with a quill, pluck'd from an Angel's wing,  
 Dipt in the fount that laves the eternal throne,  
 Trace the dark paths of Providence Divine,  
 "And justify the ways of God to Man."

F. C. 1680.

Ver. 9. The expressions, in this line, occur in one of Constable's *Sonnets*. See vol. v. p. 444 of this edition :

"The pen wherewith thou dost so heavenly finge,  
 "Made of a quill pluckt from an Angells winge."

So, in Davies's *Bien Venu*, 1606.

"But poets' pens, pluckt from Archangels' wings."

---

\* THREE Poets, in three distant ages born,  
 Greece, Italy, and England, did adorn.  
 The First in loftiness of thought surpass'd ;  
 The Next, in majesty ; in both, the LAST.  
 The force of Nature could no farther go :  
 To make a third, she join'd the former two.

DRYDEN.

\* This celebrated Epigram on Milton appears under the well-engraved head of the poet by R. White, prefixed to the folio edition of *Paradise Lost* in 1688. It has been thus published in many succeeding editions of the same poem. Dryden, I should add, is a subscriber to the edition of 1688.



*From an Account of the greatest English Poets.*

BUT MILTON next, with high and haughty  
stalks,

Unfetter'd, in majestick numbers, walks :

No vulgar hero can his Muse engage,

Nor earth's wide scene confine his hallow'd rage.

See ! see ! he upward springs, and, towering  
high,

Spurns the dull province of mortality ;

Shakes Heaven's eternal throne with dire alarms,

And sets the Almighty Thunderer in arms !

Whate'er his pen describes I more than see,

Whilst every verse array'd in majesty,

Bold and sublime, my whole attention draws,

And seems above the critick's nicer laws.

How are you struck with terrour and delight,

When Angel with Archangel copes in fight !

When great Messiah's outspread banner shines,

How does the chariot rattle in his lines !

What sound of brazen wheels, with thunder, scare

And stun the reader with the din of war !

With fear my spirits and my blood retire,

To see the Seraphs sunk in clouds of fire :

But when, with eager steps, from hence I rise,

And view the first gay scene of Paradise ;

What tongue, what words of rapture, can express

A vision so profuse of pleasantness !

ADDISON.



*Address to Great Britain.*


---

For lofty sense,  
 Creative fancy, and inspection keen  
 Through the deep windings of the human heart,  
 Is not wild Shakspeare thine and Nature's boast?  
 Is not each great, each amiable, Muse  
 Of classic ages in thy MILTON met?  
 A genius, universal as his theme;  
 Astonishing as Chaos; as the bloom  
 Of blowing Eden fair; as Heaven sublime!

THOMSON'S Summer.

---

*Ode to the Muse.*

SAY, Goddess, can the festal board,  
 Or young Olympia's form ador'd;  
 Say, can the pomp of promis'd fame  
 Relume thy faint, thy dying, flame?  
 Or have melodious airs the power  
 To give one free poetick hour?  
 Or, from amid the Elysian train,  
 The soul of MILTON shall I gain,  
 To win thee back with some celestial strain?

O powerful strain! O sacred soul!  
 His numbers every sense controul:  
 And now again my bosom burns;  
 The Muse, the Muse herself, returns!

AKENSIDE.



OUR steadfast bard, to his own genius true,  
Still bade his Muse, "fit audience find, though  
"few."

Scorning the judgement of a trifling age,  
To choicer spirits he bequeath'd his page.  
He too was scorn'd; and, to Britannia's shame,  
She scarce for half an age knew MILTON's  
name.

But now, his fame by every trumpet blown,  
We on his deathless trophies raise our own.  
Nor art nor nature did his genius bound;  
Heaven, Hell, Earth, Chaos, he survey'd around;  
All things his eye, through wit's bright empire  
thrown,

Beheld; and made, what it beheld, his own.  
Such MILTON was: 'Tis ours to bring him  
forth;

And yours to vindicate neglected worth.  
Such heaven-taught numbers should be more  
than read,

More wide the manna through the nation spread.  
Like some blest'sd spirit he to-night descends,  
Mankind he visits, and their steps befriends;  
Through mazy error's dark perplexing wood,  
Points out the path of true and real good;  
Warns erring youth, and guards the spotless  
maid

From spell of magick vice, by reason's aid.—

Dr. DALTON's Prologue to Comus, 1738.



YE patriot crowds, who burn for England's  
fame,  
Ye nymphs, whose bosoms beat at MILTON's  
name,  
Whose generous zeal, unbought by flattering  
rhymes,  
Shames the mean pensions of Augustan times ;  
Immortal patrons of succeeding days,  
Attend this prelude of perpetual praise !  
Let Wit, condemn'd the feeble war to wage  
With close malevolence, or publick rage ;  
Let Study, worn with virtue's fruitless lore,  
Behold this Theatre, and grieve no more.  
This night, distinguish'd by your smiles, shall  
tell,  
That never Britain can in vain excell ;  
The flighted arts futurity shall trust,  
And rising ages hasten to be just.

At length our mighty bard's victorious lays  
Fill the loud voice of universal praise ;  
And baffled Spite, with hopeless anguish dumb,  
Yields to renown the centuries to come ;  
With ardent haste each candidate of fame,  
Ambitious, catches at his towering name :  
He sees, and pitying sees, vain wealth bestow  
Those pageant honours which he scorn'd below,  
While crowds aloft the laureat bust behold,  
Or trace his form on circulating gold.



Unknown,—unheeded, long his offspring lay,  
 And want hung threatening o'er her slow decay.  
 What though she shine with no Miltonian fire,  
 No favouring Muse her morning dreams inspire;  
 Yet softer claims the melting heart engage,  
 Her youth laborious, and her blameless age;  
 Hers the mild merits of domestick life,  
 The patient sufferer, and the faithful wife.  
 Thus grac'd with humble virtue's native charms,  
 Her grandfire leaves her in Britannia's arms;  
 Secure with peace, with competence, to dwell,  
 While tutelary nations guard her cell.  
 Yours is the charge, ye fair, ye wise, ye brave!  
 'Tis yours to crown desert—beyond the grave.

Dr. JOHNSON'S Prologue to the Mask of  
 Comus, acted at Drury-Lane Theatre,  
 April 5, 1750, for the Benefit of Milton's  
 Grand-daughter.

---

NOR second HE that rode sublime  
 Upon the seraph-wings of ecstasy;  
 The secrets of the abyfs to spy,  
 He pass'd the flaming bounds of place and time:  
 The living throne, the sapphire blaze,  
 Where Angels tremble while they gaze,  
 He saw; but, blasted with excess of light,  
 Clos'd his eyes in endless night.

GRAY'S Progress of Poesy.



*Ode on the Poetical Character.*

HIGH on some cliff, to Heaven up-pil'd,  
Of rude access, of prospect wild,  
Where tangled round the jealous steep  
Strange shades o'erbrow the vallies deep,  
And holy Genii guard the rock,  
Its glooms embrown, its springs unlock,  
While on its rich ambitious head  
An Eden, like his own, lies spread;  
I view that oak the fancied glades among,  
By which as MILTON lay, his evening ear,  
From many a cloud that dropp'd ethereal dew,  
Nigh spher'd in Heaven, its native strains  
could hear,  
On which that ancient trump he reach'd was  
hung;  
Thither oft his glory greeting,  
From Waller's myrtle shades retreating,  
With many a vow from Hope's aspiring  
tongue  
My trembling feet his guiding steps pursue;  
In vain:—Such bliss to one alone  
Of all the sons of Soul was known;  
And Heaven and Fancy, kindred Powers,  
Have now o'erturn'd the inspiring bowers,  
Or curtain'd close such scene from every future  
view.

COLLINS.



*Ode to Memory.*

RISE, hallow'd MILTON! rise, and say,  
How, at thy gloomy close of day;  
How, when "depress'd by age, beset with  
wrongs;"

When "fall'n on evil days and evil tongues;"  
When Darkness, brooding on thy sight,  
Exil'd the sov'reign lamp of light:  
Say, what could then one cheering hope diffuse?  
What friends were thine, save Memory and the  
Muse?

Hence the rich spoils, thy studious youth  
Caught from the stores of ancient Truth:  
Hence all thy busy eye could pleas'd explore,  
When Rapture led thee to the Latian shore;  
Each scene, that Tiber's bank supplied;  
Each grace, that play'd on Arno's side;  
The tepid gales, through Tuscan glades that fly;  
The blue serene, that spreads Hesperia's sky;  
Were still thine own: Thy ample mind  
Each charm receiv'd, retain'd, combin'd.  
And thence "the nightly Visitant," that came  
To touch thy bosom with her sacred flame,  
Recall'd the long-lost beams of grace;  
That whilom shot from Nature's face,  
When God, in Eden, o'er her youthful breast  
Spread with his own right hand Perfection's  
gorgeous vest.

MASON.



*From the Rev. Thomas Warton's Address to the  
present Queen on her Marriage.*

LO! this the land, whence MILTON's Muse of  
fire

High soar'd to steal from Heaven a Seraph's lyre ;  
And told the golden ties of wedded love  
In sacred Eden's amarantine grove.

---

*From the description of night in the same Author's  
Pleasures of Melancholy.*

NOR then let dreams, of wanton folly born,  
My senses lead through flowery paths of joy ;  
But let the sacred Genius of the night  
Such mystick visions send, as Spenser saw,  
When through bewildering Fancy's magick  
maze,

To the fell house of Busyrane, he led  
The unshaken Britomart ; or MILTON knew,  
When in abstracted thought he first conceiv'd  
All Heaven in tumult, and the Seraphim  
Came towering, arm'd in adamant and gold.

---



APART, and on a sacred hill retir'd,  
Beyond all mortal inspiration fir'd,  
The mighty MILTON sits :—An host around  
Of listening Angels guard the holy ground ;  
Amaz'd they see a human form aspire  
To grasp with daring hand a Seraph's lyre,  
Inly irradiate with celestial beams,  
Attempt those high, those soul-subduing themes,  
(Which humbler Denizens of Heaven decline,)  
And celebrate, with sanctity divine,  
The starry field from warring Angels won,  
And God triumphant in his Victor Son.  
Nor less the wonder, and the sweet delight,  
His milder scenes and softer notes excite,  
When, at his bidding, Eden's blooming grove  
Breathes the rich sweets of Innocence and Love.  
With such pure joy as our Forefather knew  
When Raphael, heavenly guest, first met his  
view,  
And our glad Sire, within his blissful bower,  
Drank the pure converse of the ætherial Power,  
Round the blest Bard his raptur'd audience  
throng,  
And feel their souls imparadis'd in song.

HAYLEY'S Essay on Epick Poetry, Epist. iii.



AGES elaps'd ere Homer's lamp appear'd,  
 And ages ere the Mantuan swan was heard :  
 To carry Nature lengths unknown before,  
 To give a MILTON birth, ask'd ages more.  
 Thus Genius rose and set at order'd times,  
 And shot a day-spring into distant climes,  
 Ennobling every region that he chose ;  
 He sunk in Greece, in Italy he rose ;  
 And, tedious years of Gothick darkness pass'd,  
 Emerg'd all splendour in our isle at last.  
 Thus lovely halcyons dive into the main,  
 Then show far off their shining plumes again.

COWPER's Table Talk.

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*From the same Author's Task, B. iii.*

Philosophy, baptiz'd  
 In the pure fountain of eternal love,  
 Has eyes indeed ; and, viewing all she sees  
 As meant to indicate a God to man,  
 Gives *him* his praise, and forfeits not her own.  
 Learning has borne such fruit in other days  
 On all her branches : Piety has found  
 Friends in the friends of science, and true prayer



Has flow'd from lips wet with Castalian dew,  
Such was thy wisdom, Newton, childlike sage!  
Sagacious reader of the works of God,  
And in his word sagacious. Such too thine,  
MILTON, whose genius had angelick wings,  
And fed on manna. And such thine, in whom  
Our British Themis gloried with just cause,  
Immortal Hale! for deep discernment prais'd,  
And sound integrity, not more than fam'd  
For sanctity of manners undefil'd.

---

AND THOU, with age oppress'd, beset with  
    wrongs,  
And "fall'n on evil days and evil tongues,  
" In darkness and with dangers compass'd  
    " round,"  
What stars of joy thy night of anguish crown'd?  
What breath of vernal airs, or sound of rill,  
Or haunt by Siloa's brook, or Sion's hill,  
Or light of Cherubim, the empyreal throne,  
The effulgent car, and inexpressive One?  
Alas, not thine the foretaste of thy praise;  
A dull oblivion wrapt thy mighty lays.  
A while thy glory sunk, in dread repose;  
Then, with fresh vigour, like a giant rose,



And strode sublime, and pass'd, with generous  
rage,  
The feeble minions of a puny age.

From the Poetical Works of William  
Preston, Esq. Dublin, 1793.

---

SEE ! where the BRITISH HOMER leads  
The Epick choir of modern days ;  
Blind as the Grecian bard, he speeds  
To realms unknown to Pagan lays :  
He sings no mortal war :—his strains  
Describe no hero's amorous pains ;  
He chaunts the birth-day of the world,  
The conflict of Angelick Powers,  
The joys of Eden's peaceful bowers,  
When fled the Infernal Host, to thundering Chaos  
hurl'd.

Yet, as this deathless song he breath'd,  
He bath'd it with Affliction's tear ;  
And to Posterity bequeath'd  
The cherish'd hope to Nature dear.  
No grateful praise his labours cheer'd,  
No beam beneficent appear'd



To penetrate the chilling gloom ;—  
Ah ! what avails that Britain now  
With sculptur'd laurel decks his brow,  
And hangs the votive verse on his unconscious  
tomb !

From Poems and Plays by Mrs.  
West, 1799.



MR. ADDISON'S CRITICISM  
ON THE  
P A R A D I S E L O S T.

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*Cedite, Romani scriptores ; cedite, Graii.*

Propert. *El.* 34. lib. 2. ver. 65.

THERE is nothing in nature more irksome than general discourses, especially when they turn chiefly upon words. For this reason I shall wave the discussion of that point which was started some years since, Whether Milton's *Paradise Lost* may be called an heroick poem? Those, who will not give it that title, may call it (if they please) a *divine poem*. It will be sufficient to its perfection, if it has in it all the beauties of the highest kind of poetry ; and as for those who allege it is not an heroick poem, they advance no more to the diminution of it, than if they should say Adam is not *Æneas*, or Eve Helen.

I shall therefore examine it by the rules of epick poetry, and see whether it falls short of the *Iliad* or *Æneid*, in the beauties which are essen-



tial to that kind of writing. The first thing to be considered in an epick poem, is the FABLE, which is perfect or imperfect, according as the action which it relates is more or less so. This ACTION should have three qualifications in it. First, It should be but one action. Secondly, It should be an entire action. Thirdly, It should be a great action. To consider the action of the *Iliad*, *Æneid*, and *Paradise Lost*, in these three several lights. Homer, to preserve the unity of his action, hastens into the midst of things; as Horace has observed. Had he gone up to Leda's egg, or begun much later even at the rape of Helen, or the investing of Troy; it is manifest, that the story of the poem would have been a series of several actions. He therefore opens his poem with the discord of his princes, and artfully interweaves, in the several succeeding parts of it, an account of every thing material which relates to them, and had passed before that fatal dissension. After the same manner, Æneas makes his first appearance in the Tyrrhene seas, and within sight of Italy, because the action, proposed to be celebrated, was that of his settling himself in Latium. But because it was necessary for the reader to know what had happened to him in the taking of Troy, and in the preceding parts of his voyage, Virgil makes his hero relate it, by way of episode, in the second and third



books of the *Æneid*. The contents of both which books come before those of the first book in the thread of the story, though, for preserving of this unity of action, they follow it in the disposition of the poem. Milton, in imitation of these two great poets, opens his *Paradise Lost*, with an infernal council plotting the Fall of Man; which is the action he proposed to celebrate; and as for those great actions, which preceded in point of time, the battle of the angels, and the creation of the world, (which would have entirely destroyed the unity of his principal action, had he related them in the same order that they happened,) he cast them into the fifth, sixth, and seventh books, by way of episode to this noble Poem.

Aristotle himself allows, that Homer has nothing to boast of as to the unity of his fable, though at the same time that great critick and philosopher endeavours to palliate this imperfection in the Greek poet by imputing it, in some measure, to the very nature of an epick poem. Some have been of opinion, that the *Æneid* also labours in this particular, and has episodes which may be looked upon as excrescences rather than as parts of the action. On the contrary, the Poem, which we have now under our consideration, has no other episodes than such as naturally arise from the subject;



and yet is filled with such a multitude of astonishing incidents, that it gives us at the same time a pleasure of the greatest variety, and of the greatest simplicity ; uniform in its nature, though diversified in the execution.

I must observe also, that, as Virgil, in the poem which was designed to celebrate the original of the Roman empire, has described the birth of its great rival, the Carthaginian commonwealth ; Milton, with the like art in his Poem on the Fall of Man, has related the Fall of those Angels who are his professed enemies. Besides the many other beauties in such an episode, its running parallel with the great action of the poem hinders it from breaking the unity so much as another episode would have done, that had not so great an affinity with the principal subject. In short, this is the same kind of beauty which the criticks admire in the *Spanish Friar, or The Double Discovery*, where the two different plots look like counter-parts and copies of one another.

The second qualification required in the action of an epick poem, is, that it should be an entire action. An action is entire when it is complete in all its parts ; or, as Aristotle describes it, when it consists of a beginning, a middle, and an end. Nothing should go before it, be intermixed with it, or follow after it, that is not re-



lated to it. As, on the contrary, no single step should be omitted in that just and regular process, which it must be supposed to take from its original to its consummation. Thus we see the anger of Achilles in its birth, its continuance, and effects; and Æneas's settlement in Italy, carried on through all the oppositions in his way to it both by sea and land. The action in Milton excels (I think) both the former in this particular: We see it contrived in Hell, executed upon Earth, and punished by Heaven. The parts of it are told in the most distinct manner, and grow out of one another in the most natural order.

The third qualification of an epick poem is its Greatness. The anger of Achilles was of such consequence, that it embroiled the kings of Greece, destroyed the heroes of Asia, and engaged all the gods in factions. Æneas's settlement in Italy produced the Cæsars, and gave birth to the Roman empire. Milton's subject was still greater than either of the former; it does not determine the fate of single persons or nations, but of a whole species. The united Powers of Hell are joined together for the destruction of mankind, which they effected in part, and would have completed, had not Omnipotence itself interposed. The principal actors are Man in his greatest perfection, and Woman



in her highest beauty. Their enemies are the Fallen Angels; the Messiah their friend, and the Almighty their protector. In short, every thing that is great in the whole circle of being, whether within the verge of nature, or out of it, has a proper part assigned it in this admirable Poem.

In poetry, as in architecture, not only the whole, but the principal members, and every part of them, should be great. I will not presume to say, that the book of games in the *Æneid*, or that in the *Iliad*, are not of this nature, or to reprehend Virgil's simile of the top, and many other of the same kind in the *Iliad*, as liable to any censure in this particular; but I think we may say, without derogating from those wonderful performances, that there is an indisputable and unquestioned magnificence in every part of *Paradise Lost*, and indeed a much greater than could have been formed upon any pagan system.

But Aristotle, by the greatness of the action, does not only mean that it should be great in its nature, but also in its duration, or in other words that it should have a due length in it, as well as what we properly call greatness. The just measure of this kind of magnitude, he explains by the following similitude. An animal, no bigger than a mite, cannot appear perfect to the eye,



because the sight takes it in at once, and has only a confused idea of the whole, and not a distinct idea of all its parts ; if, on the contrary, you should suppose an animal of ten thousand furlongs in length, the eye would be so filled with a single part of it, that it could not give the mind an idea of the whole. What these animals are to the eye, a very short or a very long action would be to the memory. The first would be, as it were, lost and swallowed up by it, and the other difficult to be contained in it. Homer and Virgil have shown their principal art in this particular ; the action of the *Iliad*, and that of the *Æneid*, were in themselves exceeding short, but are so beautifully extended and diversified by the invention of episodes, and the machinery of gods, with the like poetical ornaments, that they make up an agreeable story, sufficient to employ the memory without overcharging it. Milton's action is enriched with such a variety of circumstances, that I have taken as much pleasure in reading the contents of his books, as in the best invented story I ever met with. It is possible, that the traditions, on which the *Iliad* and *Æneid* were built, had more circumstances in them, than the history of the Fall of Man, as it is related in Scripture. Besides, it was easier for Homer and Virgil to dash the truth with fiction, as they were in no danger of offending the reli-



gion of their country by it. But as for Milton, he had not only a very few circumstances upon which to raise his Poem, but was also obliged to proceed with the greatest caution in every thing that he added out of his own invention. And, indeed, notwithstanding all the restraint he was under, he has filled his story with so many surprising incidents, <sup>a</sup> which bear so close an analogy with what is delivered in Holy Writ, that it is capable of pleasing the most delicate reader, without giving offence to the most scrupulous.

The modern criticks have collected, from several hints in the *Iliad* and *Æneid*, the space

<sup>a</sup> *which bear so close an analogy with what is delivered in Holy Writ,*] “It would not, I believe, be impossible, though the task might appear too invidious, to point out several incidents in Milton, that are so far from having a close analogy with what is delivered in Holy Writ, that in reality they have no analogy with it at all. And, setting aside this consideration, it is not easy to determine, how far invention, the poet’s peculiar province, extends, when it is circumscribed by the Christian System. For it may be questioned, whether fiction is at all allowable, when the Divine Being is the subject of it.” *A Letter concerning Epick Poems, taken from Scripture History*, Lond. 1764, p. 21. The writer of this Letter cites the remark of Gibbon, in his *Essay on the Study of Literature*. See the English edition, 1764, p. 23. “The Almighty Fiat of Moses strikes us with admiration; but reason cannot comprehend, nor imagination describe, the operations of a Deity, at whose command alone millions of worlds are made to tremble: nor can we read with any satisfactory pleasure of the Devil, in Milton, warring for two whole days in Heaven against the armies of the Omnipotent.”



of time, which is taken up by the action of each of those poems ; but, as a great part of Milton's story was transacted in regions that lie out of the reach of the sun and the sphere of day, it is impossible to gratify the reader with such a calculation, <sup>b</sup> which indeed would be more curious than instructive ; none of the criticks, either

<sup>b</sup> *which indeed would be more curious than instructive ;*] The following account of the time, employed in the action of the Poem, is copied from a MS found among Sir Robert Walpole's Papers in bishop ATTERBURY's hand-writing ; and is printed in the 5th vol. of Atterbury's Epist. Correspondence, 1798, p. 191.

“ The scene opens 18 days after the defeat of the rebellious Angels : for they were nine days falling, and had lain nine days astonished on the burning lake, B. vi. 871, B. i. 50.

“ What time was spent in the consultation of Devils, and Satan's voyage to the gates of Hell, and through Chaos, &c. till he alighted on the top of Mount Niphates, Milton nowhere intimates ; and it is vain to measure that space : but he is said to have stopped on Mount Niphates at *noon*, B. iv. 30.

“ He sees Adam and Eve towards *evening*, B. iv. 331, 355, 540, and 590.

“ That night he tempts Eve with a dream, and leaves Paradise just before *day-light*, B. iv. 1014, 1015.

“ In the *morning* Adam and Eve wake, B. v. 1 ; and pay their adorations, B. v. 139 ; and then go to work, and return to their bower at noon, where Raphael then visits them, B. v. 300, 311, 369, 376. Raphael stays with them till *evening*, B. v. 376 ; and then departs, B. viii. 653.

“ Satan returns at midnight, B. xi. 53, into Paradise on the *eighth night* after he parted from thence, B. ix. 63, 67, including the night of his departure, that is, the seventh night inclusive, after Raphael left Paradise.

“ During the night he ranges Paradise, B. ix. 181 ; and enters the serpent, B. ix. 187.



ancient or modern, having laid down rules to circumscribe the action of an epick poem with any determined number of years, days, or hours.

“ In the *morning*, B. ix. 192, Adam and Eve go out separately to their work. Eve is tempted, and about *noon* eats the forbidden fruit, B. ix. 739.

“ That *evening* the Son comes down to Paradise to judge them, B. x. 53, 92, 95. Adam and Eve spend that *night* in mutual expostulations, and then in devotions.

“ Next *morning*, B. xi. 135, 173, as they are going to their labour, Raphael meets and stops them; and, after revealing to them what was to happen to them and their seed, drives them that *evening* out of Paradise.

“ So that *ten days and ten nights* is the utmost extent of time during which the action of the Poem continues; except the time spent in Hell, and Satan’s voyage from thence to Paradise; of which there is no account.”

Dr. Newton further observes, that Satan fled from the Messiah’s presence when he came down to judge Adam and Eve, and returned by *night*, B. x. 341. In his return to Hell, he meets Sin and Death in the *morning*, “ while the sun in Aries rose,” B. x. 329. After Sin and Death had arrived in Paradise, the Angels are commanded to make several alterations in the heavens and elements: and Adam is represented as lamenting aloud to himself “ *through the still night*,” B. x. 846. Adam is afterwards made to talk somewhat confusedly, in one place, as if it was still the day of the Fall, B. x. 962; and, in another place, as if it was some day after the Fall, B. x. 1050. And, having felt the cold damps of the night before, he is considering how they may provide themselves with some better warmth before *another night* comes, B. x. 1069. That other night must be supposed to be past, since the *morning* appears again “ to resalute the world with sacred light,” B. xi. 134.

So that, according to this addition in the calculation, the morning of the Poem, B. xi. 135, commences the *eleventh day* of the action. Addison, says doctor Newton, “ reckons only



Having examined the ACTION of *Paradise Lost*, let us in the next place consider the ACTORS. This is Aristotle's method of considering, first the FABLE, and secondly the MANNERS; or, as we generally call them in English, the FABLE and the CHARACTERS.

Homer has excelled all the heroick poets, that ever wrote, in the multitude and variety of his characters. Every god, that is admitted into his poem, acts a part which would have been suitable to no other deity. His princes are as much distinguished by their manners, as by their dominions; and even those among them, whose characters seem wholly made up of courage, differ from one another as to the particular kinds of courage in which they excel. In short, there is scarce a speech or action in the *Iliad*, which the reader may not ascribe to the person who

*ten days to the action of the Poem; that is, he supposes that our first parents were expelled out of Paradise the very next day after the Fall; and indeed at first sight it appears so:”* But the learned critick acutely adds, “With what propriety *then* could the sun's rising in Aries, when Satan met Sin and Death at the brink of Chaos, be mentioned, B. x. 329? and, if it was still the night after the Fall, how could Adam say, as he is represented saying, *ere this diurnal star leave cold the night*, B. x. 1069?”

Dr. Newton however acknowledges, that Milton is not very exact in the computation of time; and that perhaps he affected some obscurity in this particular, not choosing to define, as the Scripture itself has not defined, how soon after the Fall it was that our first parents were driven out of Paradise.



speaks or acts, without seeing his name at the head of it.

Homer does not only outshine all other poets in the variety, but also in the novelty, of his characters. He has introduced among his Grecian princes a person who had lived thrice the age of man, and conversed with Theseus, Hercules, Polyphemus, and the first race of heroes. His principal actor is the son of a goddess; not to mention the offspring of other deities, who have likewise a place in his poem, and the venerable Trojan prince, who was the father of so many kings and heroes. There is, in these several characters of Homer, a certain dignity, as well as novelty, which adapts them in a more peculiar manner to the nature of an heroick poem. Though at the same time, to give them a greater variety, he has described a Vulcan, that is a buffoon among his gods, and a Thersites among his mortals.

Virgil falls infinitely short of Homer in the characters of his poem, both as to their variety and novelty. Æneas is, indeed, a perfect character; but as for Achates, though he is styled the hero's friend, he does nothing in the whole poem which may deserve that title. Gyas, Mnestheus, Sergeſtus, and Cloanthus, are all of them men of the same stamp and character: "*Fortémque Gyan, fortémque Cloanthum.*"



There are indeed several natural incidents in the Part of Ascanius ; and that of Dido cannot be sufficiently admired. I do not see any thing new or particular in Turnus. Pallas and Evander are remote copies of Hector and Priam, as Lausus and Mezentius are almost parallels to Pallas and Evander. The characters of Nisus and Euryalus are beautiful, but common. We must not forget the parts of Sinon, Camilla, and some few others, which are fine improvements on the Greek poet. In short, there is neither that variety, nor novelty, in the persons of the *Æneid*, which we meet with in those of the *Iliad*.

If we look into the CHARACTERS of Milton, we shall find that he has introduced all the variety his fable was capable of receiving. The whole species of mankind was in two persons at the time, to which the subject of his Poem is confined. We have, however, four distinct characters in these two persons. We see Man and Woman in the highest innocence and perfection, and in the most abject state of guilt and infirmity. The two last characters are, indeed, very common and obvious ; but the two first are not only more magnificent, but more new, than any characters either in Virgil or Homer, or indeed in the whole circle of nature.



Milton was so sensible of this defect in the subject of his Poem, and of the few characters it would afford him, that he has brought into it two actors of a shadowy and fictitious nature, in the persons of Sin and Death; by which means he has wrought, into the body of his fable, a very beautiful and well-invented allegory. But, notwithstanding the fineness of this allegory may atone for it in some measure, I cannot think that persons of such a chimerical existence are proper actors in an epick poem; because there is not that measure of probability annexed to them, which is requisite in writings of this kind, as I shall show more at large hereafter.

Virgil has, indeed, admitted Fame as an actress in the *Æneid*; but the part she acts is very short, and none of the most admired circumstances in that divine work. We find in mock-heroick poems, particularly in the *Dispensary* and the *Lutrin*, several allegorical persons of this nature; which are very beautiful in those compositions, and may perhaps be used as an argument, that the authors of them were of opinion, such characters might have a place in an epick work. For my own part, I should be glad the reader would think so, for the sake of the Poem I am now examining; and must further add, that, if such empty unsubstantial beings may be ever made use of on this occasion, never were any



more nicely imagined, and employed in more proper actions, than those of which I am now speaking.

Another principal actor in this Poem is the great Enemy of mankind. The part of Ulysses in Homer's *Odysssey* is very much admired by Aristotle, as perplexing that fable with very agreeable plots and intricacies ; not only by the many adventures in his voyage, and the subtilty of his behaviour, but by the various concealments and discoveries of his person, in several parts of that poem. But the crafty being, I have now mentioned, makes a much longer voyage than Ulysses ; puts in practice many more wiles and stratagems, and hides himself under a greater variety of shapes and appearances ; all of which are severally detected, to the great delight and surprize of the reader.

We may likewise observe with how much art the poet has varied several characters of the persons, that speak in his infernal assembly. On the contrary, how has he represented the whole Godhead exerting itself towards Man in its full benevolence under the three-fold distinction of a Creator, a Redeemer, and a Comforter !

Nor must we omit the person of Raphael, who, amidst his tenderness and friendship for Man, shows such a dignity and condescension in all his speech and behaviour, as are suitable to a supe-



riour nature. The Angels are, indeed, as much diversified in Milton, and distinguished by their proper parts, as the gods are in Homer or Virgil. The reader will find nothing ascribed to Uriel, Gabriel, Michael, or Raphael, which is not in a particular manner suitable to their respective characters.

There is another circumstance in the principal actors of the *Iliad* and *Æneid*, which gives a peculiar beauty to those two poems, and was therefore contrived with very great judgement. I mean the authors' having chosen, for their heroes, persons who were so nearly related to the people for whom they wrote. Achilles was a Greek, and Æneas the remote founder of Rome. By this means their countrymen (whom they principally proposed to themselves for their readers) were particularly attentive to all the parts of their story, and sympathized with their heroes in all their adventures. A Roman could not but rejoice in the escapes, successes, and victories of Æneas, and be grieved at any defeats, misfortunes, or disappointments that befel him; as a Greek must have had the same regard for Achilles. And it is plain, that each of those poems have lost this great advantage, among those readers to whom their heroes are as strangers, or indifferent persons.



Milton's Poem is admirable in this respect, since 'it is impossible for any of its readers, whatever nation, country, or people he may belong to, not to be related to the persons who are the principal actors in it; but, what is still infinitely more to its advantage, the principal actors in this Poem are not only our progenitors, but our representatives. We have an actual interest in every thing they do; and no less than our utmost happiness is concerned, and lies at stake, in all their behaviour.

I shall subjoin as a corollary to the foregoing remark, an admirable observation out of Aristotle, which has been very much misrepresented in the quotations of some modern criticks. "If a man of perfect and consummate virtue falls into a misfortune, it raises our pity, but not our terror, because we do not fear that it may be our own

<sup>c</sup> *since it is impossible for any of its readers, &c.*] Yet a very ingenious writer has observed, that the great defect in this Poem is "*a want of interest in the fable; every character, except two, being supernatural; and we can never be greatly interested in the distress, or prosperity, of a person, into whose situation it is impossible for us to put ourselves.*" The same critick, after noticing the mistake which Addison here appears to have made as to the effect of national fable, (which seems to be rather the soothing the vanity of the reader, than the encrease of his interest in the action,) adds, "one should hardly have supposed, that Addison could have been ignorant of the obvious truth, that *every affection is exactly weakened in proportion to its becoming general.*" Pye's Commentary on the Poetick of Aristotle, Chap. vi. Note iii. pp. 162, 163.



case, who do not resemble the suffering person.” But, as that great philosopher adds, “if we see a man of virtue mixed with infirmities fall into any misfortune, it does not only raise our pity but our terror; because we are afraid that the like misfortunes may happen to ourselves, who resemble the character of the suffering person.”

I shall take another opportunity to observe, that a person of an absolute and consummate virtue should never be introduced in tragedy, and shall only remark in this place, that the foregoing observation of Aristotle, though it may be true in other occasions, does not hold in this; because in the present case, though the persons who fall into misfortune are of the most perfect and consummate virtue, it is not to be considered as what may possibly be, but what actually is, our own case; since we are embarked with them on the same bottom, and must be partakers of their happiness or misery.

In this, and some other very few instances, Aristotle’s rules for epick poetry (which he had drawn from his reflections upon Homer) cannot be supposed to square exactly with the heroick poems which have been made since his time; since it is evident to every impartial judge, his rules would still have been more perfect, could he have perused the *Æneid*, which was made some hundred years after his death.



I shall go through other parts of Milton's Poem; and hope that what I shall advance, as well as what I have already written, will not only serve as a comment upon Milton, but upon Aristotle.

We have already taken a general survey of the FABLE and CHARACTERS in the *Paradise Lost*. The parts which remain to be considered, according to Aristotle's method, are the SENTIMENTS and the LANGUAGE. Before I enter upon the first of these, I must advertise my reader, that it is my design, as soon as I have finished my general reflections on *these four several heads*, to give particular instances out of the Poem, now before us, of beauties and imperfections which may be observed under each of them; as also of such other particulars, as may not properly fall under any of them. This I thought fit to premise, that the reader may not judge too hastily of this piece of criticism, or look upon it as imperfect, before he has seen the whole extent of it.

The sentiments in an epick poem are the thoughts, and behaviour, which the author ascribes to the persons whom he introduces; and are *just* when they are conformable to the characters of the several persons. The sentiments have likewise a relation to *things* as well as *persons*; and are then perfect, when they are such as are adapted to the subject. If in either of these cases the poet endeavours to argue or ex-



plain, to magnify or diminish, to raise love or hatred, pity or terrour, or any other passion, we ought to consider whether the sentiments he makes use of are proper for those ends. Homer is censured by the criticks for his defect as to this particular in several parts of the *Iliad* and *Odysssey*; though at the same time those, who have treated this great poet with candour, have attributed this defect to the times in which he lived. It was the fault of the age, and not of Homer, if there wants that delicacy in some of his sentiments, which now appears in the works of men of a much inferiour genius. Besides, if there are blemishes in any particular thoughts, there is an infinite beauty in the greatest part of them. In short, if there are many poets who would not have fallen into the meannesses of some of his sentiments, there are none who could have risen up to the greatness of others. Virgil has excelled all others in the propriety of his sentiments. Milton shines likewise very much in this particular: nor must we omit one consideration which adds to his honour and reputation. Homer and Virgil introduced persons whose characters are commonly known among men, and such as are to be met with either in history, or in ordinary conversation. Milton's characters, most of them, lie out of nature; and were to be formed purely by his own invention. It shows a greater genius



in Shakspeare to have drawn his Caliban, than his Hotspur, or Julius Cæsar: the one was to be supplied out of his own imagination, whereas the other might have been formed upon tradition, history, and observation. It was much easier therefore for Homer to find proper sentiments for an assembly of Grecian generals, than for Milton to diversify his infernal council with proper characters, and inspire them with a variety of sentiments. The loves of Dido and Æneas are only copies of what has passed between other persons. Adam and Eve, before the Fall, are a different species from that of mankind, who are descended from them; and none but a poet of the most unbounded invention, and the most exquisite judgement, could have filled their conversation and behaviour with so many apt circumstances during their state of innocence.

Nor is it sufficient for an epick poem to be filled with such thoughts as are *natural*, unless it abound also with such as are *sublime*. Virgil, in this particular, falls short of Homer. He has not indeed so many thoughts that are low and vulgar; but, at the same time, has not so many thoughts that are sublime and noble. The truth of it is, Virgil seldom rises into very astonishing sentiments, where he is not fired by the *Iliad*. He every where charms and pleases us by the force of his own genius; but seldom elevates and



transports us where he does not fetch his hints from Homer.

Milton's chief talent, and indeed his distinguishing excellence, lies in the sublimity of his thoughts. There are others of the moderns who rival him in every other part of poetry; but, in the greatness of his sentiments, he triumphs over all the poets both modern and ancient, Homer only excepted. It is impossible for the imagination of man to distend itself with greater ideas, than those which he has laid together in his first, second, and sixth books. The seventh, which describes the creation of the world, is likewise wonderfully sublime, though not so apt to stir up emotion in the mind of the reader, nor consequently so perfect in the epick way of writing, because it is filled with less action. Let the judicious reader compare what Longinus has observed on several passages in Homer, and he will find parallels for most of them in the *Paradise Lost*.

From what has been said we may infer, that as there are two kinds of sentiments, the natural and the sublime, which are always to be pursued in an heroick poem, there are also two kinds of thoughts which are carefully to be avoided. The first are such as are affected and unnatural; the second, such as are mean and vulgar. As for the first kind of thoughts, we meet with little or nothing that is like them in Virgil. He has none



of those trifling points and puerilities that are so often to be met with in Ovid ; none of the epigrammatick turns of Lucan ; none of those swelling sentiments, which are so frequent in Statius and Claudian ; none of those mixed embellishments of Tasso. Every thing is just and natural. His sentiments show that he had a perfect insight into human nature, and that he knew every thing which was the most proper to affect it.

Mr. Dryden has in some places, which I may hereafter take notice of, misrepresented Virgil's way of thinking as to this particular, in the translation he has given us of the *Æneid*. I do not remember that Homer any where falls into the faults abovementioned, which were indeed the false refinements of later ages. Milton, it must be confessed, has sometimes erred in this respect, as I shall show more at large hereafter ; though, considering how all the poets of the age in which he wrote were infected with this wrong way of thinking, he is rather to be admired that he did not give more into it, than that he did sometimes comply with the vicious taste which still prevails so much among modern writers.

But, since several thoughts may be natural which are low and groveling, an epick poet should not only avoid such sentiments as are unnatural or affected, but also such as are mean and vulgar. Homer has opened a great field of raillery, to



men of more delicacy than greatness of genius, by the homeliness of some of his sentiments. But, as I have before said, these are rather to be imputed to the simplicity of the age in which he lived; to which I may also add, of that which he described; than to any imperfection in that divine poet. Zoilus, among the ancients, and Monsieur Perrault, among the moderns, pushed their ridicule very far upon him, on account of some such sentiments. There is no blemish to be observed in Virgil under this head, and but very few in Milton.

I shall give but one instance of this impropriety of thought in Homer, and at the same time compare it with an instance of the same nature, both in Virgil and Milton. Sentiments, which raise laughter, can very seldom be admitted with any decency into an heroick poem, whose business is to excite passions of a much nobler nature. Homer, however, in his characters of Vulcan and Thersites, in his story of Mars and Venus, in his behaviour of Irus, and in other passages, has been observed to have lapsed into the burlesque character, and to have departed from that serious air which seems essential to the magnificence of an epick poem. I remember but one laugh in the whole *Æneid*, which rises in the fifth book, upon Monætes, where he is represented as thrown overboard, and drying himself upon a rock. But this piece of mirth is so well



timed, that the severest critick can have nothing to say against it ; for it is in the book of games and diversions, where the reader's mind may be supposed to be sufficiently relaxed for such an entertainment. The only piece of pleasantry in *Paradise Lost*, is where the evil Spirits are described as rallying the Angels upon the success of their new invented artillery. This passage I look upon to be the most exceptionable in the whole Poem, as being nothing else but a string of puns, and those too very indifferent ones.

———— “ Satan beheld their plight,  
 “ And to his mates thus in derision call'd.  
 “ O friends, why come not on these victors proud?  
 “ Ere while they fierce were coming ; and when we,  
 “ To entertain them fair with *open front*  
 “ And breast, (what could we more?) propounded terms  
 “ *Of composition*, straight they chang'd their minds,  
 “ *Flew* off, and into strange vagaries fell,  
 “ As they would dance ; yet for a dance they seem'd  
 “ Somewhat extravagant and wild ; perhaps  
 “ For joy of offer'd peace : but I suppose  
 “ If our proposals once again were *heard*,  
 “ We should compel them to a quick *result*.  
 “ To whom thus Belial, in like gamefome mood.  
 “ Leader, the terms we sent were terms of *weight*,  
 “ Of *hard contents*, and full of force urg'd home ;  
 “ Such as we might perceive amus'd them all,  
 “ And *stumbled* many : Who receives them right,  
 “ Had need from head to foot well *understand* ;  
 “ Not *understood*, this gift they have besides,  
 “ They show us when our foes *walk not upright*  
 “ So they among themselves in pleasant vein  
 “ Stood scoffing —” B. vi, 607, &c.



Having already treated of the FABLE, the CHARACTERS, and SENTIMENTS, in the *Paradise Lost*, we are in the last place to consider the LANGUAGE; and, as the learned world is very much divided upon Milton as to this point, I hope they will excuse me if I appear particular in any of my opinions, and incline to those who judge the most advantageously of the author.

It is requisite that the language of an heroick poem should be both perspicuous and sublime. In proportion as either of these two qualities are wanting, the language is imperfect. Perspicuity is the first and most necessary qualification; in-somuch that a good-natured reader sometimes overlooks a little slip even in the grammar or syntax, where it is impossible for him to mistake the poet's sense. <sup>d</sup> Of this kind is that passage in Milton, wherein he speaks of Satan:

—— “ God and his Son except,

“ Created thing nought valu'd he nor shunn'd.”

And that in which he describes Adam and Eve:

“ Adam the goodliest man of men since born

“ His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.”

It is plain, that, in the former of these passages, according to the natural syntax, the Divine Persons mentioned in the first line are represented as

<sup>d</sup> *Of this kind &c.*] See however both passages defended, in the Notes on B. ii. 678, B. iv. 323.



created Beings ; and that, in the other, Adam and Eve are confounded with their sons and daughters. Such little blemishes as these, when the thought is great and natural, we should, with Horace, impute to a pardonable inadvertency, or to the weakness of human nature, which cannot attend to each minute particular, and give the last finishing to every circumstance in so long a work. The ancient criticks therefore, who were acted by a spirit of candour, rather than that of cavilling, invented certain figures of speech, on purpose to palliate little errors of this nature in the writings of those authors who had so many greater beauties to atone for them.

If clearness and perspicuity were only to be consulted, the poet would have nothing else to do but to clothe his thoughts in the most plain and natural expressions. But since it often happens that the most obvious phrases, and those which are used in ordinary conversation, become too familiar to the ear, and contract a kind of meaness by passing through the mouths of the vulgar ; a poet should take particular care to guard himself against idiomatick ways of speaking. Ovid and Lucan have many poornesses of expression upon this account, as taking up with the first phrases that offered, without putting themselves to the trouble of looking after such as would not only have been natural, but also



elevated and sublime. Milton has but few failings in this kind, of which, however, you may meet with some instances, as in the following passages :

“ Embryos, and idiots, eremites, and friars

“ *White, black, and gray, with all their trumpery,*

“ Here pilgrims roam —” B. iii. 474.

—— “ A while discourse they hold ;

“ *No fear lest dinner cool ;* when thus began

“ Our author —” B. v. 395.

“ Who of all ages to succeed, but, feeling

“ The evil on him brought by me, will curse

“ My head ? Ill fare our ancestor impure,

“ *For this we may thank Adam.*” B. x. 733.

The great masters in composition know very well that many an elegant phrase becomes improper for a poet or an orator, when it has been debased by common use. For this reason the works of ancient authors, which are written in dead languages, have a great advantage over those which are written in languages that are now spoken. Were there any mean phrases or idioms in Virgil and Homer, they would not shock the ear of the most delicate modern reader, so much as they would have done that of an old Greek or Roman, because we never hear them pronounced in our streets, or in ordinary conversation.

It is not therefore sufficient, that the language of an epick poem be perspicuous, unless it be also sublime. To this end it ought to deviate from



the common forms and ordinary phrases of speech. The judgement of a poet very much discovers itself in shunning the common roads of expression, without falling into such ways of speech as may seem stiff and unnatural ; he must not swell into a false sublime, by endeavouring to avoid the other extreme. Among the Greeks, Æschylus, and sometimes Sophocles, were guilty of this fault ; among the Latins, Claudian and Statius ; and, among our own countrymen, Shakspeare and Lee. In these authors the affectation of greatness often hurts the perspicuity of the style, as in many others the endeavour after perspicuity prejudices its greatness.

Aristotle has observed, that the idiomatick style may be avoided, and the sublime formed, by the following methods. First, by the use of metaphors ; such are those of Milton :

“ *Imparadised* in one another's arms.” B. iv. 506.

———“ And in his hand a reed

“ Stood waving *tipt* with fire.” B. vi. 580.

“ The grassy clods now *calv'd*.” B. vii. 463.

“ *Spangled* with eyes.” B. xi. 130.

In these and innumerable other instances, the metaphors are very bold but just ; I must however observe that the metaphors are not so thick sown in Milton, which always favours too much of wit ; that they never clash with one another, which, as Aristotle observes, turns a sentence into



a kind of an enigma or riddle; and that he seldom has recourse to them where the proper and natural words will do as well.

Another way of raising the language, and giving it a poetical turn, is to make use of the idioms of other tongues. Virgil is full of the Greek forms of speech, which the criticks call Hellenisms, as Horace in his Odes abounds with them much more than Virgil. I need not mention the several dialects which Homer has made use of for this end. Milton, in conformity with the practice of the ancient poets, and with Aristotle's rule, has infused a great many Latinisms, as well as Grecisms, and sometimes Hebraisms, into the language of his Poem; as towards the beginning of it.

“ Nor did they *not* perceive the evil plight

“ In which they were, or the fierce pains *not feel*.”

“ \* Yet *to* their general's voice they soon *obey'd* —”

—— “ Who shall tempt with wandering feet

“ The dark unbottom'd infinite abyss,

“ And through the *palpable obscure* find out

“ His uncouth way, or spread his aery flight

“ Upborn with indefatigable wings

“ Over the *vast abrupt* ?”

—— “ So both ascend

“ *In the visions of God* —”

\* Yet to *their general's voice they soon obey'd* —] This form perhaps originated with Chaucer. See the Note on B. i. 337. It is also adopted in our translation of the New Testament, *Acts* vii. 39. “ To whom our fathers would not *obey*.” The phrase is frequent in Spenser.



Under this head may be reckoned the placing the adjective after the substantive, the transposition of words, the turning the adjective into a substantive, with several other foreign modes of speech which this poet has naturalized to give his verse the greater sound, and throw it out of prose.

The third method, mentioned by Aristotle, is what agrees with the genius of the Greek language more than with that of any other tongue, and is therefore more used by Homer than by any other poet. I mean the lengthening of a phrase by the addition of words, which may either be inserted or omitted, as also by the extending or contracting of particular words by the insertion or omission of certain syllables. Milton has put in practice this method of raising his language, as far as the nature of our tongue will permit; as, in the passage before mentioned, *eremite*, for what is *hermit*, in common discourse. If you observe the measure of his verse, he has with great judgement suppressed a syllable in several words, and shortened those of two syllables into one; by which method, besides the above mentioned advantage, he has given a greater variety to his numbers. But this practice is more particularly remarkable in the names of persons and of countries, as *Beëlzebub*, *Hessebon*, and in many other particulars, wherein he has either changed



the name, or made use of that which is not the most commonly known, that he might the better depart from the language of the vulgar.

The same reason recommended to him several old words ; which also makes his Poem appear the more venerable, and gives it a greater air of antiquity.

I must likewise take notice, that there are in Milton several words of his own coining<sup>f</sup>, as *Cerberian*, *miscreated*, *hell-doomed*, *embryon*, and many others. If the reader is offended at this liberty in our English poet, I would recommend him to a discourse in Plutarch, which shows us how frequently Homer has made use of the same liberty.

Milton, by the above-mentioned helps, and by the choice of the noblest words and phrases which our tongue would afford him, has carried our language to a greater height than any of the English poets have ever done before or after him ; and made the sublimity of his style equal to that of his sentiments.

I have been the more particular in these observations on Milton's style, because it is in that part of him in which he appears the most singular. The remarks I have here made upon the practice

<sup>f</sup> of his own coining, &c.] This is not exactly the case, in the words here cited. See the Notes on B. ii. 683, 900. *Eremitic* also was common in Milton's time. See the Note on *Par. Reg.* B. i. 8.



of other poets, with my observations out of Aristotle, will perhaps alleviate the prejudice which some have taken to his Poem upon this account; though, after all, I must confess that I think his style, though admirable in general, is in some places too much stiffened and obscured by the frequent use of those methods, which Aristotle has prescribed for the raising of it.

This redundancy of those several ways of speech, which Aristotle calls “foreign language,” and with which Milton has so very much enriched, and in some places darkened, the language of his Poem, was the more proper for his use, because his Poem is written in blank verse. Rhyme, without any other assistance, throws the language off from prose, and very often makes an indifferent phrase pass unregarded; but where the verse is not built upon rhymes, there pomp of sound, and energy of expression, are indispensably necessary to support the style, and keep it from falling into the flatness of prose.

Those, who have not a taste for this elevation of style, and are apt to ridicule a poet when he departs from the common forms of expression, would do well to see how Aristotle has treated an ancient author called Euclid, for his insipid mirth upon this occasion. Mr. Dryden used to call this sort of men his prose-criticks.

I should, under this head of the language, consider Milton's NUMBERS, in which he has made



use of several elisions that are not customary among other English poets; as may be particularly observed <sup>g</sup> by his cutting off the letter *y*, when it precedes a vowel. This, and some other innovations in the measure of his verse, have varied his numbers in such a manner, as makes them incapable of fatiating the ear, and cloying the reader, which the same uniform measure would certainly have done, and which the perpetual returns of rhyme never fail to do in long narrative poems. I shall close these reflections upon the language of *Paradise Lost*, with observing that Milton has copied after Homer rather than <sup>h</sup> Virgil in the length of his periods, the copiousness of his phrases, and the running of his verses into one another.

I have now considered the *Paradise Lost* under those four great heads of the FABLE, the CHARACTERS, the SENTIMENTS, and the LANGUAGE; and have shown that he excels, in general, under

<sup>g</sup> by his cutting off the letter *y*, &c.] These elisions existed long before Milton wrote. See the *Essay on the Versification*.

<sup>h</sup> has copied after Homer rather than Virgil &c.] It is observed by Lord Monboddo also, that Homer was Milton's model for the plan and conduct of his Poem, and for the descriptions, similes, and other ornaments of style: "And I will venture to say," continues this profound critick, "there is much more of Homer in his style than even in Virgil's, though Virgil has very often imitated closely and even translated Homer.—Demosthenes was Milton's model for the speeches; and it is not easy to say which of their manners he has best copied."



each of these heads. I hope that I have made several discoveries which may appear new, even to those who are versed in critical learning. Were I indeed to choose my readers, by whose judgment I would stand or fall, they should not be such as are acquainted only with the French and Italian criticks, but also with the ancient and modern who have written in either of the learned languages. Above all, I would have them well versed in the Greek and Latin poets, without which a man very often fancies that he understands a critick, when in reality he does not comprehend his meaning.

It is in criticism, as in all other sciences and speculations ; one who brings with him any implicit notions and observations, which he has made in his reading of the poets, will find his own reflections methodised and explained, and perhaps several little hints, that had passed in his mind, perfected and improved, in the works of a good critick ; whereas one, who has not these previous lights, is very often an utter stranger to what he reads, and apt to put a wrong interpretation upon it.

Nor is it sufficient, that a man, who sets up for a judge in criticism, should have perused the authors above mentioned, unless he has also a clear and logical head. Without this talent, he is perpetually puzzled and perplexed amidst his



own blunders, mistakes the sense of those he would confute, or, if he chanced to think right, does not know how to convey his thoughts to another with clearness and perspicuity. Aristotle, who was the best critick, was also one of the best logicians, that ever appeared in the world.

Mr. Locke's *Essay on Human Understanding* would be thought a very odd book for a man to make himself master of, who would get a reputation by critical writings; though at the same time it is very certain that an author, who has not learned the art of distinguishing between words and things, and of ranging his thoughts and setting them in proper lights, whatever notions he may have, will lose himself in confusion and obscurity. I might further observe that there is not a Greek or Latin critick, who has not shewn, even in the style of his criticisms, that he was a master of all the elegance and delicacy of his native tongue.

The truth of it is, there is nothing more absurd, than for a man to set up for a critick, without a good insight into all the parts of learning; whereas many of those, who have endeavoured to signalize themselves, by works of this nature, among our English writers, are not only defective in the above-mentioned particulars, but plainly discover, by the phrases which they make use of, and by their confused way of



thinking, that they are not acquainted with the most common and ordinary systems of arts and sciences. A few general rules, extracted out of the French authors, with a certain cant of words, have sometimes set up an illiterate heavy writer for a most judicious and formidable critick.

One great mark, by which you may discover a critick who has neither taste nor learning, is this, that he seldom ventures to praise any passage in an author which has not been before received and applauded by the publick, and that his criticism turns wholly upon little faults and errors. This part of a critick is so very easy to succeed in, that we find every ordinary reader, upon the publishing of a new poem, has wit and ill-nature enough to turn several passages of it into ridicule, and very often in the right place. This Mr. Dryden has very agreeably remarked in those two celebrated lines ;

“ Errors, like straws, upon the surface flow ;

“ He, who would search for pearls, must dive below.”

A true critick ought to dwell rather upon excellencies than imperfections, to discover the concealed beauties of a writer, and communicate to the world such things as are worth their observation. The most exquisite words, and finest strokes, of an author are those, which very often



appear the most doubtful and exceptionable to a man who wants a relish for polite learning ; and they are these, which a sour undistinguishing critick generally attacks with the greatest violence. Tully observes, that it is very easy to brand or fix a mark upon what he calls *verbum ardens*, or, as it may be rendered into English, “ a glowing bold expression,” and to turn it into ridicule by a cold ill-natured criticism. A little wit is equally capable of exposing a beauty, and of aggravating a fault ; and, though such a treatment of an author naturally produces indignation in the mind of an understanding reader, it has however its effect among the generality of those whose hands it falls into ; the rabble of mankind being very apt to think, that every thing which is laughed at, with any mixture of wit, is ridiculous in itself.

Such a mirth as this is always unseasonable in a critick, as it rather prejudices the reader than convinces him ; and is capable of making a beauty, as well as a blemish, the subject of derision. A man, who cannot write with wit on a proper subject, is dull and stupid ; but one, who shows it in an improper place, is as impertinent and absurd. Besides, a man, who has the gift of ridicule, is apt to find fault with any thing that gives him an opportunity of exerting his beloved talent ; and very often censures a



passage, not because there is any fault in it, but because he can be merry upon it. Such kinds of pleasantry are very unfair and disingenuous in works of criticism, in which the greatest masters, both ancient and modern, have always appeared with a serious and instructive air.

As I intend to show the defects in the *Paradise Lost*, I thought fit to premise these few particulars, to the end that the reader may know I enter upon it, as on a very ungrateful work; and that I shall just point at the imperfections, without endeavouring to inflame them with ridicule. I must also observe with Longinus, that the productions of a great genius, with many lapses and inadvertencies, are infinitely preferable to the works of an inferior kind of author, which are scrupulously exact, and conformable to all the rules of correct writing.

I shall add, to this observation, a story out of Boccacini, which sufficiently shows us the opinion that judicious authors entertained of the sort of criticks I have been here mentioning. "A famous critick," says he, "having gathered together all the faults of an eminent poet, made a present of them to Apollo, who received them very graciously, and resolved to make the author a suitable return for the trouble he had been at in collecting them. In order to this, he set before him a sack of wheat, as it had been



just threshed out of the sheaf. He then bid him pick out the chaff from among the corn, and lay it aside by itself. The critick applied himself to the task with great industry and pleasure, and, after having made the due separation, was presented by Apollo with the chaff for his pains."

I shall now remark the several defects which appear in the FABLE, the CHARACTERS, the SENTIMENTS, and the LANGUAGE, of *Paradise Lost*; not doubting but the reader will pardon me, if I allege at the same time whatever may be said for the extenuation of such defects.

The first imperfection which I shall observe in the fable is, that the event of it is unhappy.

The fable of every poem is, according to Aristotle's division, either *simple* or *implex*. It is called *simple*, when there is no change of fortune in it; *implex*, when the fortune of the chief actor changes from bad to good, or from good to bad. The implex fable is thought the most perfect; I suppose, because it is more proper to stir up the passions of the reader, and to surprise him with a greater variety of accidents.

The implex fable is therefore of two kinds; in the first, the chief actor makes his way through a long series of dangers and difficulties, until he arrives at honour and prosperity, as we see in the stories of Ulysses and Æneas. In the second, the chief actor in the poem falls, from some



eminent pitch of honour and prosperity, into misery and disgrace. Thus we see Adam and Eve sinking, from a state of innocence and happiness, into the most abject condition of sin and sorrow.

The most taking tragedies among the ancients, were built on this last sort of implex fable; particularly the tragedy of Oedipus, which proceeds upon a story, if we may believe Aristotle, the most proper for tragedy that could be invented by the wit of man. I have already taken some pains to show, that this kind of implex fable, wherein the event is unhappy, is more apt to affect an audience than that of the first kind; notwithstanding many excellent pieces among the ancients, as well as most of those which have been written of late years in our own country, are raised upon contrary plans. I must however own, that I think this kind of fable, which is the most perfect in tragedy, is not so proper for an heroick poem.

Milton seems to have been sensible of this imperfection in his fable, and has therefore endeavoured to cure it by several expedients; particularly by the mortification which the great Adversary of mankind meets with upon his return to the assembly of infernal Spirits, as it is described in a beautiful passage of the tenth book; and likewise by the vision wherein Adam,



at the close of the Poem, sees his offspring triumphing over his great enemy, and himself restored to a happier Paradise than that from which he fell.

There is another objection against Milton's fable, which is indeed almost the same with the former, though placed in a different light, namely,—That the hero in the *Paradise Lost* is unsuccessful, and by no means a match for his enemies. This gave occasion to Mr. Dryden's reflection, that the devil was in reality Milton's hero. I think I have already obviated this objection. The *Paradise Lost* is an epick, or a narrative, poem; and he, that looks for an hero in it, searches for that which Milton never intended; but if he will needs fix the name of an hero upon any person in it, it is certainly the MESSIAH who is the hero, both in the principal action, and in the chief episodes. Paganism could not furnish out a real action for a fable greater than that of the *Iliad* or *Æneid*; and therefore an heathen could not form an higher notion of a poem than one of that kind, which they call an heroick. Whether Milton's is not of a sublimer nature I will not presume to determine: it is sufficient that I show there is in the *Paradise Lost* all the greatness of plan, regularity of design, and masterly beauties, which we discover in Homer and Virgil.



I must in the next place observe, that Milton has interwoven, in the texture of his fable, some particulars which do not seem to have probability enough for an epick poem; particularly in the actions which he ascribes to *Sin* and *Death*, and the picture which he draws of the *Limbo of Vanity*, with other passages in the second book. Such allegories rather favour of the spirit of Spenser and Ariosto, than of Homer and Virgil.

In the structure of his Poem he has likewise admitted too many digressions. It is finely observed by Aristotle, that the author of an heroic poem should seldom speak himself, but throw as much of his work as he can into the mouths of those who are his principal actors. Aristotle has given no reason for this precept: but I presume it is because the mind of the reader is more awed, and elevated, when he hears Æneas or Achilles speak, than when Virgil or Homer talk in their own persons. Besides that assuming the character of an eminent man, is apt to fire the imagination, and raise the ideas of the author. Tully tells us, mentioning his

<sup>1</sup> *the Limbo of Vanity*,] Milton's temper perhaps occasioned him to introduce this humorous, but improper, description in his epick poem. Aubrey, in his manuscript Life of Milton, says that he was *satirical*. So was Dante. Mr. Richardson thinks *the Paradise of Fools* is finely imagined; but Dr. Newton seems to consider it more worthy the fanciful genius of the Italians.



dialogue of old age, in which Cato is the chief speaker, that upon a review of it he was agreeably imposed upon, and fancied that it was Cato, and not he himself, who uttered his thoughts on that subject.

If the reader would be at the pains to see how the story of the *Iliad* and the *Æneid* is delivered by those persons who act in it, he will be surprised to find how little, in either of these poems, proceeds from the authors. Milton has, in the general disposition of his fable, very finely observed this great rule; inasmuch, that there is scarce a tenth part of it which comes from the poet; the rest is spoken either by Adam or Eve, or by some good or evil Spirit who is engaged either in their destruction, or defence.

From what has been here observed it appears, that digressions are by no means to be allowed of, in an epick poem. If the poet, even in the ordinary course of his narration, should speak as little as possible, he should certainly never let his narration sleep for the sake of any reflection of his own. I have often observed, with a secret admiration, that the longest reflection in the *Æneid*, is in that passage of the tenth book, where Turnus is represented as dressing himself in the spoils of Pallas, whom he had slain. Virgil here lets his fable stand still, for the sake



of the following remark. "How is the mind of man ignorant of futurity, and unable to bear prosperous fortune with moderation! The time will come when Turnus shall wish that he had left the body of Pallas untouched, and curse the day on which he dressed himself in these spoils." As the great event of the *Æneid*, and the death of Turnus, whom Æneas slew because he saw him adorned with the spoils of Pallas, turns upon this incident, Virgil went out of his way to make this reflection upon it, without which so small a circumstance might possibly have slipped out of his reader's memory. Lucan, who was an injudicious poet, lets drop his story very frequently for the sake of his unnecessary digressions, or his *diverticula*, as Scaliger calls them. If he gives us an account of his prodigies which preceded the civil war, he declaims upon the occasion, and shows how much happier it would be for man, if he did not feel his evil fortune before it comes to pass; and suffer, not only by its real weight, but by the apprehension of it. Milton's complaint for his blindness, his panegyrick on marriage, his reflections on Adam and Eve's going naked, of the Angels eating, and several other passages in his Poem, are liable to the same exception, though I must confess there is so great a beauty in these very



digressions, that I would not wish them out of his Poem.

I have already spoken of the CHARACTERS of the *Paradise Lost*, and declared my opinion, as to the allegorical persons who are introduced in it.

If we look into the SENTIMENTS, I think they are sometimes defective under the following heads; first, as there are several of them too much pointed, and some that degenerate even into puns. Of this last kind I am afraid is that in the first book, where, speaking of the pygmies, he calls them,

—— “ the small *infantry*  
“ Warr’d on by cranes.”

Another blemish that appears in some of his thoughts, is his frequent allusion to heathen fables, which are not certainly of a piece with the divine subject of which he treats. I do not find fault with these allusions, where the poet himself represents them as fabulous, as he does in some places, but where he mentions them as truths and matters of fact. The limits of my design will not give me leave to be particular in instances of this kind; the reader will easily remark them in his perusal of the Poem.

A third fault in his sentiments, is an unnecessary ostentation of learning, which likewise



occurs very frequently. It is certain that both Homer and Virgil were masters of all the learning of their times; but it shows itself in their works after an indirect and concealed manner. Milton seems ambitious of letting us know, by his excursions on free-will and predestination, and his many glances upon history, astronomy, geography, and the like, as well as by the terms and phrases he sometimes makes use of, that he was acquainted with the whole circle of arts and sciences.

If, in the last place, we consider the LANGUAGE of this great poet, we must allow, what I have before hinted, that it is often too much laboured, and sometimes obscured by old words, transpositions, and foreign idioms. Seneca's objection to the style of a great author, *Riget ejus oratio, nihil in eâ placidum, nihil lene*, is what many criticks make to Milton. As I cannot wholly refute it, so I have already apologized for it: to which I may further add, that Milton's sentiments and ideas were so wonderfully sublime, that it would have been impossible for him to have represented them in their full strength and beauty, without having recourse to these foreign assistances. Our language sunk under him, and was unequal to that greatness of soul, which furnished him with such glorious conceptions.



A second fault in his language is, that he often affects <sup>k</sup> a kind of jingle in his words, as in the following passage, and many others :

“ And brought into the *world* a *world* of woe.”

—— “ Begirt the Almighty throne

“ *Beseeching* or *besieging*.”

“ This *tempted* our *attempt*.”

“ At one flight *bound* high overleap’d all *bound*.”

I know there are figures of this kind of speech, that some of the greatest ancients have been guilty of it, and that Aristotle himself has given it a place in his rhetorick among the beauties of that art. But, as it is in itself poor and trifling, it is I think at present universally exploded by all the masters of polite writing.

<sup>k</sup> *a kind of jingle in his words,*] In the first instance, here cited by Addison, Milton is endeavoured to be exculpated by Atterbury. See the Note, B. ix. 11. In the second, by doctor Newton. See Note, B. v. 869. In the third, and fourth, by proofs that they were the jingle of the age. See Notes, B. i. 642, B. iv. 181. From remarking a jingle of the same kind, in a book familiar to him, and abounding with such passages, I suspect that Milton wrote, B. iii. 79.

“ O, then, at last *relent* : Is there no place

“ Left for *repentance*, none for pardon left ?”

Where doctor Newton thinks the poet might have given it *repent* instead of *relent*. But see Sylvester’s *Du Bartas*, edit. 1621, p. 1111.

“ But will confess, if hee offend,

“ *Relent*, *Repent*, and soon amend,

“ And timely render satisfaction.”



The last fault which I shall take notice of in Milton's style, is the frequent use of what the learned call technical words, or terms of art. It is one of the greatest beauties of poetry, to make hard things intelligible, and to deliver what is abstruse of itself in such easy language as may be understood by ordinary readers; besides that the knowledge of a poet should rather seem born with him, or inspired, than drawn from books and systems. I have often wondered how Mr. Dryden could translate a passage out of Virgil after the following manner:

“ Tack to the larboard, and stand off to sea,

“ Veer starboard sea and land.”

Milton makes use of *larboard* in the same manner. When he is upon building, he mentions *Dorick pillars*, *pilasters*, *cornice*, *freeze*, *architrave*. When he talks of heavenly bodies, you meet with *ecliptick* and *eccentrick*, the *trepidation*, *stars dropping from the zenith*, *rays culminating from the equator*: to which might be added many instances of the like kind in several other arts and sciences.

I have seen, in the works of a modern philosopher, a map of the spots in the sun. My description of the faults and blemishes in *Paradise Lost*, may be considered as a piece of the same nature. To pursue the allusion: As it is observed, that, among the bright parts of the luminous body



above-mentioned, there are some which glow more intensely, and dart a stronger light than others; so, notwithstanding I have already shown Milton's Poem to be very beautiful in general, I shall now proceed to take notice of such beauties as appear to me more exquisite than the rest. Milton has proposed the subject of his Poem in the following verses:

- “ Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
- “ Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
- “ Brought death into the world and all our woe,
- “ With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
- “ Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
- “ Sing, heavenly Muse!”

These lines are perhaps as plain, simple, and unadorned, as any of the whole Poem, in which particular the author has conformed himself to the example of Homer, and the precept of Horace.

His invocation to a work which turns in a great measure upon the creation of the world, is very properly made to the Muse who inspired Moses in those Books from whence our author drew his subject, and to the Holy Spirit who is therein represented as operating after a particular manner in the first production of nature. This whole exordium rises very happily into noble language and sentiment, as I think the transition to the fable is exquisitely beautiful and natural.

The nine days astonishment, in which the Angels lay entranced after their dreadful overthrow



and fall from Heaven, before they could recover either the use of thought or speech, is a noble circumstance, and very finely imagined. The division of Hell into seas of fire, and into firm ground impregnated with the same furious element, with that particular circumstance of the exclusion of *Hope* from those infernal regions, are instances of the same great and fruitful invention.

The thoughts in the first speech and description of Satan, who is one of the principal actors in this Poem, are wonderfully proper to give us a full idea of him. His pride, envy, and revenge, obstinacy, despair, and impenitence,<sup>1</sup> are all of them very artfully interwoven. In short, his first speech is a complication of all those passions, which discover themselves separately in several other of his speeches in the Poem. The whole part of this great enemy of mankind is filled with such incidents as are very apt to raise

<sup>1</sup> *are all of them very artfully interwoven.*] Richardson judiciously notices also the change and confusion of the fallen Angels, most artfully expressed in the abruptness of the beginning of Satan's speech: "*If thou art he, that Beëlzebub* — He stops; and falls into a bitter reflection on their present condition, compared with that in which they lately were. He attempts again to open his mind; cannot proceed on what he intends to say, but returns to those sad thoughts; still doubting whether 'tis really his associate in the revolt, as now in misery and ruin; by that time he had expatiated on this (his heart was oppressed with it) he is assured to whom he speaks, and goes on to declare his proud unrelenting mind."



and terrify the reader's imagination. Of this nature, in the book now before us, is his being the first that awakens out of the general trance, with his posture on the burning lake, his rising from it, and the description of his shield and spear: To which we may add his call to the fallen Angels that lay plunged and stupified in the sea of fire.

But there is no single passage in the whole Poem worked up to a greater sublimity, than that wherein his person is described in those celebrated lines :

—— “ He, above the rest  
 “ In shape and gesture proudly eminent,  
 “ Stood like a tower, &c.”

His sentiments are every way answerable to his character, and suitable to a created Being of the most exalted and most depraved nature. Such is that in which he takes possession of his place of torments :

—— “ Hail, horrors ! hail,  
 “ Infernal world ! and thou, profoundest Hell,  
 “ Receive thy new possessor ; one who brings  
 “ A mind not to be chang'd by place or time.”

And afterwards,

—— “ Here at least  
 “ We shall be free : &c.”

Amidst those impieties, which this enraged Spirit utters in other places of the Poem, the author has taken care to introduce none that is not big with absurdity, and incapable of shocking



a religious reader ; his words, as the poet himself describes them, bearing only a “ semblance of worth, not substance.” He is likewise, with great art, described as owning his adversary to be Almighty. Whatever perverse interpretation he puts on the justice, mercy, and other attributes, of the Supreme Being, he frequently confesses his Omnipotence ; that being the perfection he was forced to allow him, and the only consideration which could support his pride under the shame of his defeat.

Nor must I here omit that beautiful circumstance of his bursting out in tears, upon his survey of those innumerable Spirits whom he had involved in the same guilt and ruin with himself.

The catalogue of evil Spirits has abundance of learning in it, and <sup>m</sup> a very agreeable turn of

<sup>m</sup> *a very agreeable turn of poetry,*] Dr. Warburton has conceived this to be the *finest part* of the Poem, in the design and drawing, if not in the colouring ; “ for,” he says, “ the *Paradise Lost* being a religious Epick, nothing could be more artful than thus deducing the original of superstition. This gives it a great advantage over the catalogues Milton has imitated ; for Milton’s becomes thereby a necessary part of the work ; as the original of superstition, an essential part of a religious Epick, could not have been shown without it. Had Virgil’s or Homer’s been omitted, their poems would not have suffered materially ; because, in their relations of the following actions, we find the soldiers who were before catalogued : But, by no following history of superstition that Milton could have brought in, could we find out these devils’ agency ; it was therefore necessary he should inform us of the fact.”



poetry, which rises in a great measure from its describing the places where they were worshipped, by those beautiful marks of rivers so frequent among the ancient poets. The author had doubtless in this place Homer's catalogue of ships, and Virgil's list of warriors, in his view. The characters of Moloch and Belial prepare the reader's mind for their respective speeches and behaviour in the second and sixth books. The account of Thammuz is finely romantick, and suitable to what we read among the ancients of the worship which was paid to that idol.

The reader will pardon me if I insert as a note on that beautiful passage, the account given us by the late ingenious Mr. Maundrell of this ancient piece of worship, and probably the first occasion of such a superstition. "We came to a fair large river—doubtless the ancient river Adonis, so famous for the idolatrous rites performed here in lamentation of Adonis. We had the fortune to see what may be supposed to be the occasion of that opinion which Lucian relates concerning this river, viz. That this stream, at certain seasons of the year, especially about the feast of Adonis, is of a bloody colour; which the heathens looked upon as proceeding from a kind of sympathy in the river for the death of Adonis, who was killed by a wild boar in the mountains, out of which this stream rises. Something like



this we saw actually come to pass ; for the water was stained to surprising redness ; and, as we observed travelling, had discoloured the sea a great way into a reddish hue, occasioned doubtless by a sort of minium, or red earth, washed into the river by the violence of the rain, and not by any stain from Adonis's blood."

The passage in the catalogue, explaining the manner how Spirits transform themselves by contraction or enlargement of their dimensions, is introduced with great judgement, to make way for several surprising accidents in the sequel of the Poem. There follows one, at the very end of the FIRST BOOK, which is what the French criticks call *marvellous*, but at the same time *probable* by reason of the passage last mentioned. As soon as the infernal palace is finished, we are told the multitude and rabble of Spirits immediately shrunk themselves into a small compass, that there might be room for such a numberless assembly in this capacious hall. But it is the poet's refinement upon this thought which I most admire, and which is indeed very noble in itself. For he tells us, that, notwithstanding the vulgar, among the fallen Spirits, contracted their forms, those of the first rank and dignity still preserved their natural dimensions.

The character of Mammon, and the description of the Pandemonium, are full of beauties.



There are several other strokes in the first book wonderfully poetical, and instances of that sublime genius so peculiar to the author. Such is the description of Azazel's stature, and the infernal standard which he unfurls; as also of that ghastly light, by which the fiends appear to one another in their place of torments. The shout of the whole host of fallen Angels when drawn up in battle array: The review, which the Leader makes of his infernal army: The flash of light which appeared upon the drawing of their swords: The sudden production of the Pandemonium: The artificial illumination made in it.

There are also several noble similes and allusions in the first book. And here I must observe, that, when Milton alludes either to things or persons, he never quits his simile until it rises to some very great idea, which is often foreign to the occasion that gave birth to it. The resemblance does not, perhaps, last above a line or two, but the poet runs on with the hint until he has raised out of it some glorious image or sentiment, proper to inflame the mind of the reader, and to give it that sublime kind of entertainment, which is suitable to the nature of an heroick poem. Those, who are acquainted with Homer's and Virgil's way of writing, cannot but be pleased with this kind of structure in Milton's similitudes. I am the more particular on this head,



because ignorant readers, who have formed their taste upon the quaint similies and little turns of wit, which are so much in vogue among modern poets, cannot relish these beauties which are of a much higher nature, and are therefore apt to censure Milton's comparisons in which they do not see any surprising points of likeness. Monsieur Perrault was a man of this vitiated relish; and, for that very reason, has endeavoured to turn into ridicule several of Homer's similitudes, which he calls *comparaisons à longue queue*, "long-tail'd comparisons." I shall conclude my remarks on the first book of Milton with the answer which Monsieur Boileau makes to Perrault on this occasion: "Comparisons," says he, "in odes and epick poems, are not introduced only to illustrate and embellish the discourse, but to amuse and relax the mind of the reader; by frequently disengaging him from too painful an attention to the principal subject, and by leading him into other agreeable images. Homer excelled in this particular, whose comparisons abound with such images of nature as are proper to relieve and diversify his subjects. He continually instructs the reader, and makes him take notice, even in objects which are every day before his eyes, of such circumstances as he should not otherwise have observed." To this he adds, as a maxim universally acknowledged, "That it is not necessary



in poetry for the points of the comparison to correspond with one another exactly, but that a general resemblance is sufficient; and that too much nicety in this particular favours of the rhetorician and epigrammatist."

In short, if we look into the conduct of Homer, Virgil, and Milton; as the great fable is the soul of each poem, so, <sup>n</sup> to give their works an agreeable variety, their episodes are so many short fables, and their similes so many short episodes; to which you may add, if you please, that their metaphors are so many short similes. If the reader considers the comparisons, in the first book of Milton, of the sun in an eclipse, of the sleeping Leviathan, of the bees swarming about their hive, of the fairy dance, in the view wherein I have here placed them, he will easily discover the great beauties that are in each of those passages.—

I have before observed in general, that the persons, whom Milton introduces into his Poem, always discover such sentiments and behaviour,

<sup>n</sup> to give their works an agreeable variety,] It is observed also by another eminent critick, that Milton has a peculiar talent in embellishing the principal subject of his similes with others that are agreeable. Similes of this kind have, beside, a separate effect: They diversify the narration by new images that are not strictly necessary to the comparison: They are short episodes, which, without drawing us from the principal subject, afford great delight by their beauty and variety: As in B. i. 288—291, 589—599. B. iii. 431—441. B. iv. 142—165. See *Elements of Criticism*, viith edit. vol. ii. 196.



as are in a peculiar manner conformable to their respective characters. Every circumstance in their speeches, and actions, is, with great justness and delicacy, adapted to the persons who speak and act. As the poet very much excels in this consistency of his characters, I shall beg leave to consider several passages of the SECOND BOOK in this light. That superiour greatness, and mock majesty, which are ascribed to the Prince of the fallen Angels, are admirably preserved in the beginning of this book. His opening and closing the debate: His taking on himself that great enterprize at the thought of which the whole infernal assembly trembled: His encountering the hideous phantom who guarded the gates of Hell, and appeared to him in all his terrours; are instances of that proud and daring mind which could not brook submission, even to Omnipotence.

The same boldness and intrepidity of behaviour discovers itself, in the several adventures which he meets with, during his passage through the regions of unformed matter; and particularly in his address to those tremendous Powers, who are described as presiding over it.

The part of Moloch is likewise, in all its circumstances, full of that fire and fury, which distinguish this Spirit from the rest of the fallen Angels. He is described in the first book as besmeared with the blood of human sacrifices,



and delighted with the tears of parents, and the cries of children. In the second book he is marked out as the fiercest Spirit that fought in Heaven: and, if we consider the figure which he makes in the sixth book, where the battle of the Angels is described, we find it every way answerable to the same furious, enraged, character.

It may be worth while to observe, that Milton has represented this violent impetuous Spirit, who is hurried on by such precipitate passions, as the *first* that rises in that assembly, to give his opinion upon their present posture of affairs. Accordingly, he declares himself abruptly for war; and appears incensed at his companions, for losing so much time as even to deliberate upon it. All his sentiments are rash, audacious, and desperate. Such is that of arming themselves with their torments, and turning their punishments upon him who inflicted them.

His preferring annihilation to shame or misery, is also highly suitable to his character; as the comfort he draws from their disturbing the peace of Heaven, that, if it be not victory, it is revenge, is a sentiment truly diabolical, and becoming the bitterness of this implacable Spirit.

Belial is described in the first book, as the idol of the lewd and luxurious. He is in the second book, pursuant to that description, characterised as timorous and slothful; and, if we look into



the sixth book, we find him celebrated in the battle of Angels for nothing but that scoffing speech which he makes to Satan, on their supposed advantage over the enemy. As his appearance is uniform, and of a piece, in these three several views, we find his sentiments in the infernal assembly every way conformable to his character. Such are his apprehensions of a second battle, his horrors of annihilation, his preferring to be miserable rather than *not to be*. I need not observe, that ° the contrast of thought in this

° *the contrast of thought*] Mr. Thyer has justly remarked, that this fine contrast betwixt the characters of Moloch and Belial, might probably be first suggested to Milton by a contrast of the same kind between Argantes and Aletes in the second canto of Tasso's *Gierusalemme Liberata*. Milton perhaps might also remember, in describing the *tongue* of Belial as *dropping manna*, Fairfax's diffuse translation of the persuasive manner which Tasso gives Aletes, stanza 61.

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“ on the Christian lords  
 “ Downe fell the mildew of his sugred words.”

Belial, however, is drawn by Milton according to his character in the demonologick system. Wierus, in his catalogue of evil Spirits, notices both his fair person and his specious address. “ Regem *Belial* aliqui dicunt statim post *Luciferum* fuisse creatum, ideoque sentiunt ipsum esse patrem et seductorem eorum qui ex Ordine ceciderunt. Cogitur hic divina virtute, cum accipit sacrificia, munera, et holocausta, ut vicissim det immolantibus responsa vera: at *per horam in veritate non perdurat*, nisi potentia divina compellatur, ut dictum est. *Angelicam assumit imaginem impense pulchram*, in igneo curru sedens. *Blandè loquitur*. Tribuit dignitates &c.” Pseudo-monarchia Dæmonum, apud Wier. de Lamiis, &c. Basil, 1582, p. 919.



speech, and that which precedes it, gives an agreeable variety to the debate.

Mammon's character is so fully drawn in the first book, that the poet adds nothing to it in the second. We were before told, that he was the first who taught mankind to ransack the earth for gold and silver, and that he was the architect of Pandemonium, or the infernal palace, where the evil Spirits were to meet in council. His speech in this book is every way suitable to so depraved a character. How proper is that reflection, of their being unable to taste the happiness of Heaven were they actually there, in the mouth of one, who, while he was in Heaven, is said to have had his mind dazzled with the outward pomps and glories of the place, and to have been more intent on the riches of the pavement, than on the beatifick vision! I shall also leave the reader to judge how agreeable the following sentiments are to the same character :

---

“ This deep world  
“ Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst  
“ Thick clouds and dark doth Heaven's all-ruling Sire  
“ Choose to reside, his glory unobscur'd,  
“ And with the majesty of darkness round  
“ Covers his throne; from whence deep thunders roar  
“ Mustering their rage, and Heaven resembles Hell?  
“ As he our darkness, cannot we his light  
“ Imitate when we please? This desert soil  
“ Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold;  
“ Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise  
“ Magnificence; and what can Heaven show more?”



Beelzebub, who is reckoned the second in dignity that fell, and is, in the first book, the second that awakens out of the trance, and confers with Satan upon the situation of their affairs, maintains his rank in the book now before us. There is a wonderful majesty described in his rising up to speak. He acts as a kind of moderator between the two opposite parties, and proposes a third undertaking, which the whole assembly gives into. The motion he makes, of detaching one of their body in search of a new world, is grounded upon a project devised by Satan, and cursorily proposed by him in the following lines of the first book :

- “ Space may produce new worlds ; whereof so rife
- “ There went a fame in Heaven, that he ere long
- “ Intended to create, and therein plant
- “ A generation, whom his choice regard
- “ Should favour equal to the sons of Heaven ;
- “ Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps
- “ Our first eruption ; thither or elsewhere ;
- “ For this infernal pit shall never hold
- “ Celestial Spirits in bondage, nor the abyfs
- “ Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
- “ Full counsel must mature ——— :”

It is on this project that Beelzebub grounds his proposal :

- 
- “ What if we find
  - “ Some easier enterprize ? There is a place
  - “ (If ancient and prophetick fame in Heaven
  - “ Err not,) another world, the happy seat
  - “ Of some new race call'd Man, about this time



“ To be created like to us, though less  
“ In power and excellence, but favour'd more  
“ Of Him who rules above ; so was his will  
“ Pronounc'd among the Gods, and by an oath,  
“ That shook Heaven's whole circumference, confirm'd.”

The reader may observe how just it was, not to omit in the first book the project upon which the whole Poem turns : as also that the Prince of the fallen Angels was the only proper person to give it birth, and that the next to him in dignity was the fittest to second and support it.

There is besides, I think, something wonderfully beautiful, and very apt to affect the reader's imagination, in this ancient prophecy or report in Heaven, concerning the Creation of Man. Nothing could show more the dignity of the species, than this tradition which ran of them before their existence. They are represented to have been the talk of Heaven before they were created. Virgil, in compliment to the Roman commonwealth, makes the heroes of it appear in their state of pre-existence ; but Milton does a far greater honour to mankind in general, as he gives us a glimpse of them even before they are in being.

The rising of this great assembly is described in a very sublime and poetical manner :

“ Their rising all at once, was as the sound  
“ Of thunder heard remote.”



The diversions of the fallen Angels, with the particular account of their place of habitation, are described with great pregnancy of thought, and copiousness of invention. The diversions are every way suitable to Beings who had nothing left them but strength and knowledge misapplied. Such are their contentions at the race, and in feats of arms, with their entertainments in the following lines:

“ Others, with vast Typhœan rage more fell,  
 “ Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air  
 “ In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wild uproar.”

Their musick is employed in celebrating their own criminal exploits; and their discourse, in founding the unfathomable depths of fate, free-will, and foreknowledge.

The several circumstances in the description of Hell are finely imagined; as the four rivers which disgorge themselves into the sea of fire, the extremes of cold and heat, <sup>p</sup> and the river of oblivion. The monstrous animals, produced in that infernal world, are represented by a single line, which gives us a more horrid idea of

<sup>p</sup> *and the river of oblivion.*] The water of which the damned in vain attempt to taste. See v. 606—613. “ This,” says doctor Newton, “ is a fine allegory to show that there is no forgetfulness in Hell. Memory makes a part of the punishment of the damned, and reflection but encreases their misery.”



them, than a much longer description would have done.

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“ Nature breeds,  
 “ Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,  
 “ Abominable, inutterable, and worse  
 “ Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,  
 “ Gorgons, and hydras, and chimeras dire.”

This episode of the fallen Spirits, and their place of habitation, comes in very happily to unbend the mind of the reader from its attention to the debate. An ordinary poet would indeed have spun out so many circumstances to a great length, and by that means have weakened, instead of illustrated, the principal fable.

The flight of Satan to the gates of Hell is finely imaged.

I have already declared my opinion of the allegory concerning Sin and Death, which <sup>a</sup> is

<sup>a</sup> is however a very finished piece in its kind, &c.] The allegory of Sin and Death has been censured, perhaps fastidiously, by Voltaire, and some English criticks, as abounding with nauseous and disgusting images. It was, however, a favourite passage with Atterbury; whose taste in polite literature, as doctor Newton has observed, was never questioned. “ I return you,” says Atterbury in a letter to Pope, “ your MILTON; and I protest to you, this last perusal of him has given me such new degrees, I will not say of pleasure, but of admiration and astonishment, that I look upon the sublimity of Homer, and the majesty of Virgil, with somewhat less reverence than I used to do. I challenge you, with all your partiality, to show me, in the first of these, any thing equal to the allegory of Sin and Death, either as to the great-



however a very finished piece in its kind, when it is not considered as a part of an epick poem. The genealogy of the several persons is contrived with great delicacy. Sin is the daughter of Satan, and Death the offspring of Sin. The incestuous mixture between Sin and Death produces those monsters and hell-hounds which from time to time enter into their mother, and tear the bowels of her who gave them birth. These are the terrours of an evil conscience, and the proper fruits of Sin, which naturally rise from the apprehensions of Death. This last beautiful moral is, I think, clearly intimated in the speech of Sin, where, complaining of this her dreadful issue, she adds,

“ *Before mine eyes in opposition sits*  
 “ *Grim Death, my son and foe; who sets them on,*  
 “ *And me his parent would full soon devour*  
 “ *For want of other prey, but that he knows*  
 “ *His end with mine involv'd ———*”

ness and justness of the invention, or the height and beauty of the colouring.”—

Milton, indeed, in painting Sin, has selected, with his usual skill, such circumstances as exhibit the fair-appearing monster in a true light; and raise, in consequence, a detestation of an object so specious and so deformed. I have sometimes thought that part of his description might be suggested by Shakspeare, *K. Rich.* III, A. iv. S. iv.

“ *From forth the kennel of thy womb hath crept*  
 “ *A hell-hound, that doth hunt us all to death,*”

the terrours of an evil conscience,] See the Note on B. iv. 29.



I need not mention to the reader the beautiful circumstance in the last part of this quotation. He will likewise observe how naturally the three persons, concerned in this allegory, are tempted, by one common interest, to enter into a confederacy together; and how properly Sin is made<sup>s</sup> the portress of Hell, and the only Being that can open the gates to that world of tortures.

The descriptive part of this allegory is likewise very strong, and full of sublime ideas. The figure of Death, the regal crown upon his head, his menace of Satan, his advancing to the combat, the outcry at his birth, are circumstances too noble to be passed over in silence, and extremely suitable to this King of Terrours. I need not mention the justness of thought, which is observed in the generation of these several symbolical persons; that Sin was produced upon the first revolt of Satan, that Death appeared soon after he was cast into Hell, and that the terrours of conscience were conceived at the gate of this place of torments. The description of the gates is very poetical, as the opening of them is full of Milton's spirit.

In Satan's voyage through the Chaos there are<sup>t</sup> several imaginary persons described, as residing

<sup>s</sup> *the portress of Hell,*] See the Note on B. ii. 746.

<sup>t</sup> *several imaginary persons &c.*] Dr. Newton has observed that Addison seems to disapprove of these fictitious beings, thinking



in that immense waste of matter. This may perhaps be conformable to the taste of those criticks, who are pleased with nothing in a poet which has not life and manners ascribed to it; but, for my own part, I am pleased most with those passages in this description which carry in them a greater measure of probability, and are such as might possibly have happened. Of this kind is his first mounting in the smoke that rises from the infernal pit; his falling into a cloud of nitre, and the like combustible materials, that by their explosion still hurried him forward in his voyage; his springing upward like a pyramid of fire; with his laborious passage through that confusion of elements, which the poet calls

“ The womb of Nature, and perhaps her grave.”

them perhaps, like Sin and Death, improper for an epick poem: But he contends that Milton may be allowed to place such imaginary persons in the regions of Chaos, as Virgil describes similar beings within the confines of Hell, *Æn.* vi. 273—281; a passage of acknowledged beauty: And it is impossible, he adds, to be pleased with Virgil, and to be displeased with Milton. In further justification of Milton, doctor Newton also refers to the introduction of similar shadowy beings in Seneca, *Herc. Fur.* 686, in Statius, *Theb.* vii. 47, in Claudian, *In Rufin.* i. 30, and in Spenser, *Faer. Qu.* ii. vii. 21, &c. To these instances might be added the beautiful personifications of Sackville in the *Mirror for Magistrates*. See Note on *Par. Lost*, B. xi. 489. In Masenius's infernal council, Death, Diseases, Cares, Labour, Grief, Poverty, and Hunger, are persons. *Sarcotis*, B. i. But Milton has introduced, with much sublimity, long before this author, many shadowy beings, in his poem *In Quintum Novembris*.



The glimmering light which shot into the Chaos from the utmost verge of the creation, and the distant discovery <sup>u</sup> of the earth that hung close by the moon, are wonderfully beautiful and poetical.—

Horace advises a poet to consider thoroughly the nature and force of his genius. Milton seems to have known perfectly well, wherein his strength lay, and has therefore chosen a subject entirely conformable to those talents, of which he was master. As his genius was wonderfully turned to the sublime, his subject is the noblest that could have entered into the thoughts of man. Every thing that is truly great, and astonishing, has a place in it. The whole system of the intellectual world; the Chaos, and the Creation; Heaven, Earth, and Hell; enter into the constitution of his Poem.

Having in the first and second books represented the infernal world with all its horrors; the thread of his fable naturally leads him into the opposite regions of bliss and glory.

<sup>w</sup> If Milton's majesty forsakes him any where,

<sup>u</sup> *of the earth &c.*] This is a mistake, into which Dr. Bentley also fell; and is corrected in the Note on v. 1052.

<sup>w</sup> *If Milton's majesty forsakes him any where, &c.*] It has been often observed, that Milton's chief deficiency is in the THIRD BOOK. "The attempt to describe God Almighty himself, and to recount dialogues between the Father and the Son," says Dr. Blair, "was too bold and arduous; and is that wherein the poet,



it is in those parts of his Poem, where the Divine Persons are introduced as speakers. One may, I think, observe, that the author proceeds with a kind of fear and trembling, whilst he describes the sentiments of the Almighty. He dares not give his imagination its full play, but chooses to confine himself to such thoughts as are drawn from the books of the most orthodox divines, and to such expressions as may be met with in Scripture. The beauties, therefore, which we are to look for in these speeches, are not of a poetical nature; nor so proper to fill the mind with sentiments of grandeur, as with thoughts of devotion. The passions, which they are designed to raise, are a divine love and religious fear. The particular beauty of the speeches in the THIRD BOOK, consists in that shortness and perspicuity of style, in which the poet has couched the greatest mysteries of Christianity, and drawn together, in a regular scheme, the whole dispensation of Providence with respect to Man. He has represented all the abstruse doctrines of predestination, free-will, and grace; as also the great points of incarnation and redemption, (which naturally grow up in a

as was to have been expected, has been most unsuccessful."—Milton indeed was conscious that he had soared too high; and therefore, with exemplary humility, acknowledges, B. vii. 23.

“ Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,

“ *More safe I sing with mortal voice.*”



Poem that treats of the Fall of Man,) with great energy of expression, and in a clearer and stronger light than I have ever met with in any other writer. As these points are dry in themselves to the generality of readers, the concise and clear manner, in which he has treated them, is very much to be admired; as is likewise that particular art which he has made use of in the interspersing of all those graces of poetry, which the subject was capable of receiving.

\* The survey of the whole creation, and of every thing that is transacted in it, is a prospect worthy of Omniscience; and as much above that, in which Virgil has drawn his Jupiter, as the Christian idea of the Supreme Being is more rational and sublime than that of the Heathens. The particular objects, on which he is described to have cast his eye, are represented in the most beautiful and lively manner.

Satan's approach to the confines of the creation is finely imaged in the beginning of the speech which immediately follows. The effects of this speech in the blessed Spirits, and in the Divine Person to whom it was addressed, cannot but fill the mind of the reader with a secret pleasure and complacency.

I need not point out the beauty of that circum-

\* *The survey of the whole creation, &c.*] See the Note, B. iii.  
56.



stance, wherein the whole host of Angels are represented as standing mute; nor show how proper the occasion was to produce such a silence in Heaven. The close of this divine colloquy, and the hymn of angels that follows upon it, are wonderfully beautiful and poetical.

Satan's walk upon the outside of the universe, which at a distance appeared to him of a globular form, but, upon his nearer approach, looked like an unbounded plain, is natural and noble: as his roaming upon the frontiers of the creation between that mass of matter, which was wrought into a world, and that shapeless unformed heap of materials, which still lay in chaos and confusion, strikes the imagination with something astonishingly great and wild. I have before spoken of the Limbo of Vanity, which the poet places upon this outermost surface of the universe; and shall here explain myself more at large on that, and other parts of the Poem, which are of the same shadowy nature.

Aristotle observes, that the fable of an epick poem should abound in circumstances that are both credible and astonishing; or, as the French criticks choose to phrase it, the fable should be filled with the probable and the marvellous. This rule is as fine and just as any in Aristotle's whole art of poetry.

If the fable is only probable, it differs nothing from a true history; if it is only marvellous, it



is no better than a romance. The great secret, therefore, of heroick poetry is to relate such circumstances as may produce in the reader at the same time both belief and astonishment. This is brought to pass, in a well chosen fable, by the account of such things as have really happened, or at least of such things as have happened according to the received opinions of mankind. Milton's fable is a master-piece of this nature; as the War in Heaven, the Condition of the fallen Angels, the State of Innocence, the Temptation of the Serpent, and the Fall of Man, though they are very astonishing in themselves, are not only credible, but actual points of faith.

The next method of reconciling miracles with credibility, is by a happy invention of the poet; as, in particular, when he introduces agents of a superiour nature, who are capable of effecting what is wonderful, and what is not to be met with in the ordinary course of things. Ulysses's ship being turned into a rock, and Æneas's fleet into a shoal of water-nymphs, though they are very surprising accidents, are nevertheless probable when we are told that they were the gods who thus transformed them. It is this kind of machinery which fills the poems both of Homer and Virgil with such circumstances as are wonderful, but not impossible; and so frequently produce in the reader the most pleasing passion



that can rise in the mind of man, which is admiration. If there be any instance in the *Æneid* liable to exception upon this account, it is in the beginning of the third book, where Æneas is represented as tearing up the myrtle that dropped blood. To qualify this wonderful circumstance, Polydorus tells a story from the root of the myrtle; that, the barbarous inhabitants of the country having pierced him with spears and arrows, the wood which was left in his body took root in his wounds, and gave birth to that bleeding tree. This circumstance seems to have the marvellous without the probable, because it is represented as proceeding from natural causes, without the interposition of any god, or other supernatural power capable of producing it. The spears and arrows grow of themselves without so much as the modern help of an enchantment. If we look into the fiction of Milton's fable, though we find it full of surprising incidents, they are generally suited to our notions of the things and persons described, and tempered with a due measure of probability. I must only make an exception to the Limbo of Vanity, with his episode of Sin and Death, and some of the imaginary persons in his Chaos. These passages are astonishing, but not credible; the reader cannot so far impose upon himself as to see a possibility in them; they are the descrip-



tion of dreams and shadows, not of things or persons. I know that many criticks look upon the stories of Circe, Polypheme, the Syrens, nay the whole *Odysssey* and *Iliad*, to be allegories ; but, allowing this to be true, they are fables ; which, considering the opinions of mankind that prevailed in the age of the poet, might possibly have been according to the letter. The persons are such as might have acted what is ascribed to them ; as the circumstances, in which they are represented, might possibly have been truth and realities. This appearance of probability is so absolutely requisite in the greater kinds of poetry, that Aristotle observes, the ancient tragick writers made use of the names of such great men as had actually lived in the world, though the tragedy proceeded upon adventures they were never engaged in ; on purpose to make the subject more credible. In a word, besides the hidden meaning of an epick allegory, the plain literal sense ought to appear probable. The story should be such as an ordinary reader may acquiesce in, whatever natural, moral, or political, truth may be discovered in it by men of greater penetration.

Satan, after having long wandered upon the surface, or outmost wall of the universe, discovers at last a wide gap in it, which led into the creation, and is described as the opening through which the Angels pass to and fro into



the lower world, upon their errands to mankind. His sitting upon the brink of this passage and taking a survey of the whole face of nature that appeared to him new and fresh in all its beauties, with the simile illustrating this circumstance, fills the mind of the reader with as surprising and glorious an idea as any that arises in the whole Poem. He looks down into that vast hollow of the universe with the eye, or (as Milton calls it in his first book) with the ken of an Angel. He surveys all the wonders in this immense amphitheatre that lie between both the poles of Heaven, and takes in at one view the whole round of the creation.

His flight between the several worlds that shined on every side of him, and the particular description of the sun, are set forth in all the wantonness of a luxuriant imagination. His shape, speech, and behaviour upon his transforming himself into an Angel of light, are touched with exquisite beauty. The poet's thought of directing Satan to the sun, which in the vulgar opinion of mankind is the most conspicuous part of the creation, the placing in it an Angel, is a circumstance very finely contrived, and the more adjusted to a poetical probability, as it was a received doctrine among the most famous philosophers, that every orb had its *Intelligence*; and as an Apostle in Sacred Writ is



said to have seen such an Angel in the sun. In the answer, which this Angel returns to the disguised evil Spirit, there is such a becoming majesty as is altogether suitable to a superiour Being. The part of it, in which he represents himself as present at the creation, is very noble in itself; and not only proper where it is introduced, but requisite to prepare the reader for what follows in the seventh book:

“ I saw when at his word the formless mass,

“ This world's material mould, came to a heap:

“ Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar

“ Stood rul'd, stood vast infinitude confin'd;

“ Till at his second bidding Darkness fled,

“ Light shone, &c.”

In the following part of the speech he points out the earth with such circumstances, that the reader can scarce forbear fancying himself employed on the same distant view of it:

“ Look downward on the globe, whose hither side

“ With light from hence, though but reflected, shines;

“ That place is Earth, the seat of Man; that light

“ His day, &c.”

I must not conclude my reflections upon the third book, without taking notice of that celebrated complaint of Milton with which it opens, and which certainly deserves all the praises that have been given it; though, as I have before hinted, it may rather be looked on as an ex-



crescence, than as an essential part of the Poem. The same observation might be applied to that beautiful digression upon hypocrisy in the same book.—

Those, who know how many volumes have been written on the poems of Homer and Virgil, will easily pardon the length of my discourse upon Milton. The *Paradise Lost* is looked upon by the best judges, as the greatest production, or at least the noblest work of genius, in our language; and therefore deserves to be set before an English reader in its full beauty. For this reason, though I have already endeavoured to give a general idea of its graces and imperfections, I thought myself obliged to consider every book in particular. The first three books I have already despatched, and am now entering upon the fourth. I need not acquaint my reader that there are multitudes of beauties in this great author, especially in the descriptive parts of his Poem, which I have not touched upon; it being my intention to point out those only, which appear to me the most exquisite, or those which are not so obvious to ordinary readers. Every one that has read the criticks who have written upon the *Odysssey*, the *Iliad*, and the *Æneid*, knows very well, that, though they agree in their opinions of the great beauties in those poems, they have nevertheless



each of them discovered several master-strokes, which have escaped the observation of the rest. In the same manner, I question not but any writer, who shall treat of this subject after me, may find several beauties in Milton, which I have not taken notice of. I must likewise observe, that as the greatest masters of critical learning differ among one another, as to some particular points in an epick poem, I have not bound myself scrupulously to the rules which any one of them has laid down upon that art, but have taken the liberty sometimes to join with one, and sometimes with another, and sometimes to differ from all of them, when I have thought that the reason of the thing was on my side.

We may consider the beauties of the FOURTH BOOK under three heads. In the first are those pictures of still-life, which we meet with in the description of Eden, Paradise, Adam's bower, &c. In the next are the machines, which comprehend the speeches and behaviour of the good and bad Angels. In the last is the conduct of Adam and Eve, who are the principal actors in the Poem.

In the description of Paradise, the poet has observed Aristotle's rule of lavishing all the ornaments of diction on the weak unactive parts of the fable, which are not supported by the



beauty of sentiments and characters. Accordingly the reader may observe, that the expressions are more florid and elaborate in these descriptions, than in most other parts of the Poem. I must further add, that, though the *drawings* of gardens, rivers, rainbows, and the like dead pieces of nature, are justly censured in an heroick poem, when they run out into an unnecessary length; the description of Paradise would have been faulty, had not the poet been very particular in it; not only as it is the scene of the principal action, but as it is requisite to give us an idea of that happiness from which our first parents fell. The plan of it is wonderfully beautiful, and formed upon the short sketch which we have of it in Holy Writ. Milton's exuberance of imagination has poured forth such a redundancy of ornaments on this seat of happiness and innocence, that it would be endless to point out each particular.

I must not quit this head, without further observing, that there is scarce a speech of Adam or Eve in the whole Poem, wherein the sentiments and allusions are not taken from this their delightful habitation. The reader, during their whole course of action, always finds himself in the walks of Paradise. In short, as the criticks have remarked, that, in those poems wherein shepherds are actors, the thoughts ought always



to take a tincture from the woods, fields, and rivers ; so we may observe, that our first parents seldom lose sight of their happy station in any thing they speak or do ; and, if the reader will give me leave to use the expression, that their thoughts are always Paradisiacal.

We are in the next place to consider the machines of the fourth book. Satan, being now within prospect of Eden, and looking round upon the glories of the creation, is filled with sentiments different from those which he discovered whilst he was in Hell. The place inspires him with thoughts more adapted to it. He reflects upon the happy condition from whence he fell, and breaks forth into a speech that is softened with several transient touches of remorse and self-accusation : but at length he confirms himself in impenitence, and in his design of drawing Man into his own state of guilt and misery. This conflict of passions is raised with a great deal of art, as the opening of his speech to the sun is very bold and noble.

This speech is, I think, the finest that is ascribed to Satan in the whole Poem. The evil Spirit afterwards proceeds to make his discoveries concerning our first parents, and to learn after what manner they may be best attacked. His bounding over the walls of Paradise ; his sitting in the shape of a cormorant upon the tree



of life, which stood in the center of it, and overtopped all the other trees of the garden; his alighting among the herd of animals, which are so beautifully represented as playing about Adam and Eve, together with his transforming himself into different shapes, in order to hear their conversation; are circumstances that give an agreeable surprise to the reader; and are devised with great art, to connect that series of adventures in which the poet has engaged this great artificer of fraud.

The thought <sup>y</sup> of Satan's transformation into a cormorant, and placing himself on the tree of life, seems raised upon that passage in the *Iliad*, where two deities are described, as perching on the top of an oak in the shape of vultures.

His planting himself at the ear of Eve under the form of a toad, in order to produce vain dreams and imaginations, is a circumstance of the same nature; as his starting up in his own form is wonderfully fine, both in the literal description, and in the moral which is concealed under it. His answer upon his being discovered, and demanded to give an account of himself, is conformable to the pride and intrepidity of his character.

<sup>y</sup> of Satan's transformation into a cormorant,] Pope says, that the circumstance of Sleep's sitting in likeness of a bird on the fir-tree upon mount Ida, in the fourteenth *Iliad*, is the passage to which Milton here alludes.



Zephon's rebuke, with the influence it had on Satan, is exquisitely graceful and moral. Satan is afterwards led away to Gabriel, the Chief of the guardian Angels, who kept watch in Paradise. His disdainful behaviour on this occasion is so remarkable a beauty, that the most ordinary reader cannot but take notice of it. Gabriel's discovering his approach at a distance, is drawn with great strength and liveliness of imagination.

The conference between Gabriel and Satan abounds with sentiments proper for the occasion, and suitable to the persons of the two speakers. Satan clothing himself with terrour when he prepares for the combat is truly sublime, and at least equal to Homer's description of Discord celebrated by Longinus, or to that of Fame in Virgil; who are both represented with their feet standing upon the earth, and their heads reaching above the clouds.

I must here take notice, that Milton is every where full of hints, and sometimes literal translations, taken from the greatest of the Greek and Latin poets. But this I may reserve for a discourse by itself, because I would not break the thread of these speculations, that are designed for English readers, with such reflections as would be of no use but to the learned.

I must however observe in this place, that the breaking off the combat between Gabriel and



Satan, by the hanging out of the golden scales in Heaven, is a refinement upon Homer's thought, who tells us, that, before the battle between Hector and Achilles, Jupiter weighed the event of it in a pair of scales. The reader may see the whole passage in the 22d *Iliad*.

Virgil, before the last decisive combat, describes Jupiter in the same manner, as weighing the fates of Turnus and Æneas. Milton, though he fetched this beautiful circumstance from the *Iliad* and *Æneid*, does not only insert it as a poetical embellishment, like the authors above-mentioned; but makes an artful use of it for the proper carrying on of his fable, and for the breaking off the combat between the two warriors, who were upon the point of engaging. To this we may further add, that Milton is the more justified in this passage, as we find the same noble allegory in Holy Writ, where a wicked prince, some few hours before he was assaulted and slain, is said to have been "weighed in the scales, and to have been found wanting."

I must here take notice, under the head of the machines, that Uriel's gliding down to the earth upon a sun-beam, with the poet's device to make him *descend*, as well in his return to the sun as in his coming from it, is a prettiness that might have been admired in a little fanciful poet, but seems below the genius of Milton. The descrip-



tion of the host of armed Angels walking their nightly round in Paradise, is of another spirit :

“ So saying, on he led his radiant files,

“ Dazzling the moon ;”

as that account of the hymns, which our first parents used to hear them sing in these their midnight walks, is altogether divine, and inexpressibly amusing to the imagination.

We are, in the last place, to consider the parts which Adam and Eve act in the fourth book. The description of them, as they first appeared to Satan, is exquisitely drawn, and sufficient to make the fallen Angel gaze upon them with all that astonishment, and those emotions of envy, in which he is represented.

There is a fine spirit of poetry in the lines which follow, wherein they are described as sitting on a bed of flowers by the side of a fountain, amidst a mixed assembly of animals.

<sup>2</sup> The speeches of these two first lovers flow equally from passion and sincerity. The professions they make to one another are full of warmth ; but at the same time founded on truth. In a word, they are the gallantries of Paradise.

<sup>2</sup> *The speeches of these two first lovers &c.*] “ Milton has painted the passion of love,” says Dr. Beattie, “ as distinct from all others, with such peculiar truth and beauty, that we cannot think Voltaire’s encomium too high, when he says, that love in all other poetry seems a weakness, but in *Paradise Lost* a virtue.” Essay on Poetry and Musick, Chap. 5.



The part of Eve's speech, in which she gives an account of herself upon her first creation, and the manner in which she was brought to Adam, is, I think, as beautiful a passage as any in Milton, or perhaps in any other poet whatsoever. These passages are all worked off with so much art, that they are capable of pleasing the most delicate reader, without offending the most severe :

“ That day I oft remember, when from sleep, &c.”

A poet of less judgement and invention than this great author, would have found it very difficult to have filled these tender parts of the Poem with sentiments proper for a state of innocence ; to have described the warmth of love, and the professions of it, without artifice or hyperbole ; to have made the man speak the most endearing things, without descending from his natural dignity, and the woman receiving them without departing from the modesty of her character ; in a word, to adjust the prerogatives of wisdom and beauty, and make each appear to the other in its proper force and loveliness. This mutual subordination of the two sexes is wonderfully kept up in the whole Poem, as particularly in the speech of Eve I have before mentioned, and upon the conclusion of it in the following lines :

“ So spake our general mother, and with eyes

“ Of conjugal attraction unprov'd,

“ And meek surrender, half-embracing lean'd



“ On our first father ; half her swelling breast  
“ Naked met his, under the flowing gold  
“ Of her loose tresses hid : he in delight  
“ Both of her beauty, and submissive charms,  
“ Smil’d with superiour love.”

The poet adds, that the Devil turned away with envy at the sight of so much happiness.

We have another view of our first parents in their evening discourses, which is full of pleasing images and sentiments suitable to their condition and characters. The speech of Eve, in particular, is dressed up in such a soft and natural turn of words and sentiments, as cannot be sufficiently admired \*.

I shall close my reflections upon this book, with observing the masterly transition which the poet makes to their evening worship in the following lines :

“ Thus, at their shady lodge arriv’d, both stood,  
“ Both turn’d, and under open sky ador’d  
“ The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heaven,  
“ Which they beheld, the moon’s resplendent globe,  
“ And starry pole : *Thou also mad’st the night,*  
“ *Maker Omnipotent, and thou the day, &c.*”

Most of the modern heroick poets have imitated the ancients in beginning a speech without premising, that the person said thus or thus ; but, as it is easy to imitate the ancients in the

\* See a criticism of Addison on a fine passage in this fourth book, v. 640, &c. in the *Tatler*, Vol. ii. No. 114.



omission of two or three words, it requires judgement to do it in such a manner as they shall not be missed, and that the speech may begin naturally without them. <sup>zz</sup> There is a fine instance of this kind out of Homer, in the twenty-third chapter of Longinus.—

We were told in the foregoing book, how the evil Spirit practised upon Eve as she lay asleep, in order to inspire her with thoughts of vanity, pride, and ambition. The author, who shows a wonderful art throughout his whole Poem, in preparing the reader for the several occurrences that arise in it, founds, upon the above-mentioned circumstance, the first part of the FIFTH BOOK. Adam, upon his awaking, finds Eve still asleep, with an unusual discomposure in her looks. The posture, in which he regards her, is described with a tenderness not to be expressed; as the whisper, with which he awakens her, is the softest that ever was conveyed to a lover's ear.

I cannot but take notice, that Milton, in the conferences between Adam and Eve, had his eye very frequently upon the book of *Canticles*, in which there is a noble spirit of eastern poetry, and very often not unlike what we meet with in Homer, who is generally placed near the age of Solomon. I think there is no question but the poet, in the preceding speech, remembered those

<sup>zz</sup> There is a fine instance &c.] See the Note, B. iv. 724.



two passages, which are spoken on the like occasion, and filled with the same pleasing images of nature.

*“ My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away; for lo the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away. Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field, let us get up early to the vineyards, let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth.”*

His preferring the garden of Eden to that

————— *“ where the sapient king  
“ Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse,”*

shows that the poet had this delightful scene in his mind.

Eve's dream is full of those *high conceits ingendering pride*, which, we are told, the Devil endeavoured to instil into her. Of this kind is that part of it where she fancies herself awakened by Adam in the following beautiful lines:

*“ Why sleep'st thou, Eve? now is the pleasant time,  
“ The cool, the silent, save where silence yields  
“ To the night-warbling bird, that now awake  
“ Tunes sweetest his love-labour'd song; now reigns  
“ Full orb'd the moon, and with more pleasing light*



“ Shadowy sets off the face of things : In vain,  
“ If none regard. Heaven wakes with all his eyes,  
“ Whom to behold but thee, nature's desire,  
“ In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment,  
“ Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze !”

An injudicious poet would have made Adam talk through the whole work in such sentiments as these : But flattery and falsehood are not the courtship of Milton's Adam, and could not be heard by Eve in her state of innocence ; excepting only in a dream, produced on purpose to taint her imagination. Other vain sentiments of the same kind, in this relation of her dream, will be obvious to every reader. Though the catastrophe of the Poem is finely prefaged on this occasion, the particulars of it are so artfully shadowed, that they do not anticipate the story which follows in the ninth book. I shall only add, that, though the vision of itself is founded upon truth, the circumstances of it are full of that wildness and inconsistency which are natural to a dream. Adam, conformable to his superiour character for wisdom, instructs and comforts Eve upon this occasion.

The morning hymn is written in imitation of one of those psalms, where, in the overflowings of gratitude and praise, the psalmist calls not only upon the angels, but upon the most conspicuous parts of the inanimate creation, to join with him in extolling their common Maker. Invocations



of this nature fill the mind with glorious ideas of God's works, and awaken that divine enthusiasm, which is so natural to devotion. But if this calling upon the dead parts of nature, is at all times a proper kind of worship; it was in a particular manner suitable to our first parents, who had the creation fresh upon their minds, and had not seen the various dispensations of Providence, nor consequently could be acquainted with those many topicks of praise which might afford matter to the devotions of their posterity. I need not remark the beautiful spirit of poetry, which runs through this whole hymn, or the holiness of that resolution with which it concludes.

Having already mentioned those speeches which are assigned to the persons in this Poem, I proceed to the description which the poet gives of Raphael. His departure from before the throne, and his flight through the choirs of Angels, are finely imaged. As Milton every where fills his Poem with circumstances that are marvellous and astonishing, he describes the gate of Heaven as framed after such a manner, that it opened of itself upon the approach of the Angel who was to pass through it.

<sup>a</sup> The poet here seems to have regarded two

<sup>a</sup> *The poet here seems to have regarded &c.*] Hume, in his Notes on *Paradise Lost*, 1695, p. 176, seems to think Milton indebted rather to *Iliad* v. 749.

Αὐτόμαται δὲ πύλαι μύκον ἑραινῶ, ἃς ἔχον ὦραι.



or three passages in the 18th *Iliad*, as that in particular, where, speaking of Vulcan, Homer says, that he had made twenty tripodes running on golden wheels ; which, upon occasion, might go of themselves to the assembly of the gods, and, when there was no more use for them, return again after the same manner. Scaliger has rallied Homer very severely upon this point, as M. Dacier has endeavoured to defend it. I will not pretend to determine, whether, in this particular of Homer, the marvellous does not lose sight of the probable. As the miraculous workmanship of Milton's gates is not so extraordinary as this of the tripodes, so I am persuaded he would not have mentioned it, had he not been supported in it by a passage in the Scripture, which speaks of wheels in Heaven that had life in them, and moved of themselves, or stood still, in conformity with the Cherubims, whom they accompanied.

There is no question but Milton had this circumstance in his thoughts ; because, in the following book, he describes the chariot of the Messiah with *living* wheels, according to the plan in Ezekiel's vision.

I question not but Bossu, and the two Daciers, who are for vindicating every thing that is cen-

And Dr. Newton follows him. But Mr. Upton observes, that the passage in Milton has its sanction more from *Psalms* xxiv. 7, than from Homer.



fured in Homer, by something parallel in Holy Writ, would have been very well pleased had they thought of confronting Vulcan's tripodes with Ezekiel's wheels.

Raphael's descent to the earth, with the figure of his person, is represented in very lively colours. Several of the French, Italian, and English poets, have given a loose to their imaginations in the description of Angels: But I do not remember to have met with any so finely drawn, and so conformable to the notions which are given of them in Scripture, as this in Milton. After having set him forth in all his heavenly plumage, and represented him as alighting upon the earth, the poet concludes his description with a circumstance, which is altogether new, and imagined with the greatest strength of fancy:

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“ Like Maia's son he stood,  
“ And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance fill'd  
“ The circuit wide.”

Raphael's reception by the guardian Angels; his passing through the wilderness of sweets; his distant appearance to Adam; have all the graces that poetry is capable of bestowing. The author afterwards gives us a particular description of Eve in her domestick employments.

Though in this, and other parts of the same book, the subject is only the housewifry of our first parent, it is set off with so many pleasing



images, and strong expressions, as make it none of the least agreeable parts in this divine work.

The natural majesty of Adam, and at the same time his submissive behaviour to the superiour Being, who had vouchsafed to be his guest; the solemn Hail which the Angel bestows upon the mother of mankind, with the figure of Eve ministering at the table; are circumstances which deserve to be admired.

Raphael's behaviour is every way suitable to the dignity of his nature, and to that character of a sociable Spirit, with which the author has so judiciously introduced him. He had received instructions to converse with Adam, as one friend converses with another, and to warn him of the enemy, who was contriving his destruction: Accordingly he is represented as sitting down at table with Adam, and eating of the fruits of Paradise. The occasion naturally leads him to his discourse on the food of Angels. After having thus entered into conversation with Man upon more indifferent subjects, he warns him of his obedience; and makes a natural transition to the history of that fallen Angel, who was employed in the circumvention of our first parents.

Had I followed Monsieur Bossu's method, already noticed, I should have dated the action of Paradise Lost from the beginning of Raphael's speech in this book, as he supposes the action of the *Æneid* to begin in the second



book of that poem. I could allege many reasons for my drawing the action of the *Æneid* rather from its immediate beginning in the first book, than from its remote beginning in the second; and show why I have considered the sacking of Troy as an episode, according to the common acceptation of that word. But as this would be a dry, unentertaining, piece of criticism, and perhaps unnecessary to those who have read <sup>aa</sup> my observations, I shall not enlarge upon it. Which ever of the notions be true, the unity of Milton's action is preserved according to either of them; whether we consider the Fall of Man in its immediate beginning, as proceeding from the resolutions taken in the infernal council, or in its more remote beginning, as proceeding from the first revolt of the Angels in Heaven. The occasion which Milton assigns for this revolt, as it is founded on hints in Holy Writ, and on the opinion of some great writers, so it was the most proper that the poet could have made use of.

The revolt in Heaven is described with great force of imagination, and a fine variety of circumstances. The learned reader cannot but be pleased with the poet's imitation of Homer in the last of the following lines :

“ At length into the limits of the north

“ They came, and Satan took his royal seat

“ High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount

<sup>aa</sup> See before, p. 25—31.



“ Rais'd on a mount, with pyramids and towers  
“ From diamond quarries hewn, and rocks of gold,  
“ The palace of great Lucifer, (so call  
“ That structure in the dialect of men  
“ Interpreted)—”

Homer mentions persons, and things, which, he tells us, in the language of the gods are called by different names from those they go by in the language of men. Milton has imitated him with his usual judgement in this particular place, wherein he has likewise the authority of Scripture to justify him. The part of Abdiel, who was the only Spirit that in this infinite host of Angels preserved his allegiance to his Maker, exhibits to us a noble moral of religious singularity. The zeal of the Seraph breaks forth in a becoming warmth of sentiments and expressions, as the character which is given us of him denotes that generous scorn and intrepidity which attends heroick virtue. The author doubtless designed it as a pattern to those, who live among mankind in their present state of degeneracy and corruption. —

We are now entering upon the SIXTH BOOK, in which the poet describes the battle of the Angels; having raised his reader's expectation, and prepared him for it by several passages in the preceding books. I omitted quoting these passages in my observations on the former books, having purposely reserved them for the opening



of this, the subject of which gave occasion to them. The author's imagination was so inflamed with this great scene of action, that where-ever he speaks of it, he rises, if possible, above himself. Thus where he mentions Satan in the beginning of his Poem :

—— “ Him the Almighty Power  
“ Hurl'd headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,  
“ With hideous ruin and combustion down  
“ To bottomless perdition ; there to dwell  
“ In adamantine chains and penal fire,  
“ Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms.”

We have likewise several noble hints of it in the infernal conference :

“ O Prince, O Chief of many throned Powers,  
“ That led the embattled Seraphim to war ;  
“ Too well I see and rue the dire event,  
“ That with sad overthrow and foul defeat  
“ Hath lost us Heaven ; and all this mighty host  
“ In horrible destruction laid thus low.  
“ But see ! the angry victor has recall'd  
“ His ministers of vengeance and pursuit  
“ Back to the gates of Heaven : The sulphurous hail  
“ Shot after us in storm, o'erblown, hath laid  
“ The fiery surge, that from the precipice  
“ Of Heaven receiv'd us falling ; and the thunder,  
“ Wing'd with red lightning and impetuous rage,  
“ Perhaps has spent his shafts, and ceases now  
“ To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.”

There are several other very sublime images on the same subject in the first book, as also in the second.



“ What, when we fled amain, pursued and struck  
“ With Heaven's afflicting thunder, and besought  
“ The deep to shelter us? this Hell then seem'd  
“ A refuge from those wounds —”

In short, the poet never mentions any thing of this battle, but in such images of greatness and terrour as are suitable to the subject. Among several others I cannot forbear quoting that passage, where the Power, who is described as presiding over the chaos, speaks in the second book:

“ Thus Satan ; and him thus the Anarch old,  
“ With faltering speech and visage incompas'd,  
“ Answer'd : I know thee, stranger, who thou art,  
“ That mighty leading Angel, who of late  
“ Made head against Heaven's King, though overthrown.  
“ I saw and heard ; for such a numerous host  
“ Fled not in silence through the frighted deep,  
“ With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,  
“ Confusion worse confounded ; and Heaven-gates  
“ Pour'd out by millions her victorious bands  
“ Pursuing —”

It required great pregnancy of invention, and strength of imagination, to fill this battle with such circumstances as should raise and astonish the mind of the reader ; and at the same time an exactness of judgement, to avoid every thing that might appear light or trivial. Those, who look into Homer, are surpris'd to find his battles still rising one above another, and improving in horror, to the conclusion of the *Iliad*. Milton's fight of Angels is wrought up with the same



beauty. It is ushered in with such signs of wrath as are suitable to Omnipotence incensed. The first engagement is carried on under a cope of fire, occasioned by the flights of innumerable burning darts and arrows which are discharged from either host. The second onset is still more terrible, as it is filled with those artificial thunders, which seem to make the victory doubtful, and produce a kind of consternation even in the good Angels. This is followed by the tearing up of mountains and promontories; till in the last place Messiah comes forth in the fulness of majesty and terrour. The pomp of his appearance amidst the roarings of his thunders, the flashes of his lightnings, and the noise of his chariot-wheels, is described with the utmost flights of human imagination.

There is nothing in the first and last day's engagement which does not appear natural, and agreeable enough to the ideas most readers would conceive of a fight between two armies of Angels.

The second day's engagement is apt to startle an imagination, which has not been raised and qualified for such a description, by the reading of the ancient poets<sup>b</sup>, and of Homer in particular. It was certainly a very bold thought in our author, to ascribe the first use of artillery to the rebel angels. But as such a pernicious invention may

<sup>b</sup> See, however, the Notes, B. vi. 484.



be well supposed to have proceeded from such authors ; so it entered very properly into the thoughts of that Being, who is all along described as aspiring to the majesty of his Maker. Such engines were the only instruments he could have made use of to imitate those thunders, that in all poetry, both sacred and profane, are represented as the arms of the Almighty. The tearing up the hills was not altogether so daring a thought as the former. We are, in some measure, prepared for such an incident by the description of the giant's war, which we meet with among the ancient poets. What still made this circumstance the more proper for the poet's use, is the opinion of many learned men, that the fable of the giants' war, which makes so great a noise in antiquity, and gave birth to the sublimest description in Hesiod's works, was an allegory founded upon this very tradition of a fight between the good and bad Angels.

It may, perhaps, be worth while to consider with what judgement Milton, in this narration, has avoided every thing that is mean and trivial in the descriptions of the Latin and Greek poets ; and at the same time improved every great hint which he met with in their works upon this subject. Homer in that passage, which Longinus has celebrated for its sublimeness, and which Virgil and Ovid have copied after him, tells us,



that the giants threw Offa upon Olympus, and Pelion upon Offa. He adds an epithet to Pelion (*εἰνοσίφυλλον*) which very much swells the idea, by bringing up to the reader's imagination all the woods that grew upon it. There is further a greater beauty in his singling out by name these three remarkable mountains, so well known to the Greeks. This last is such a beauty, as the scene of Milton's war could not possibly furnish him with. Claudian, in his fragment upon the giants' war, has given full scope to that wildness of imagination which was natural to him. He tells us that the giants tore up whole islands by the roots, and threw them at the gods. He describes one of them in particular taking up Lemnos in his arms, and whirling it to the skies, with all Vulcan's shop in the midst of it. Another tears up mount Ida, with the river Enipeus, which ran down the sides of it; but the poet, not content to describe him with this mountain upon his shoulders, tells us that the river flowed down his back as he held it up in that posture. It is visible to every judicious reader, that such ideas favour more of burlesque, than of the sublime. They proceed from a wantonness of imagination, and rather divert the mind than astonish it. Milton has taken every thing that is sublime in these several passages, and composes out of them the following great image :



" From their foundations loosening to and fro,  
 " They pluck'd the seated hills, with all their load,  
 " Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops  
 " Uplifting bore them in their hands."

We have the full majesty of Homer in this short description, improved by the imagination of Claudian, without its puerilities.

I need not point out the description of the fallen Angels seeing the promontories hanging over their heads in such a dreadful manner, with the other numberless beauties in this book, which are so conspicuous, that they cannot escape the notice of the most ordinary reader.

There are indeed so many wonderful strokes of poetry in this book, and such a variety of sublime ideas, that it would have been impossible to have given them a place within the bounds of these remarks. Besides that, I find it in a great measure done to my hand at the end of my lord Roscommon's Essay on translated poetry. I shall refer my reader thither for some of the <sup>bb</sup> master-strokes

<sup>bb</sup> " Have we forgot how Raphael's numerous prose  
 " Led our exalted souls through heavenly camps,  
 " And mark'd the ground where proud apostate Thrones  
 " Defied Jehovah!—Here, 'twixt host and host,  
 " (A narrow, but a dreadful, interval,)  
 " Portentous fight! before the cloudy van  
 " Satan, with vast and haughty strides advanc'd,  
 " Came towering, arm'd in adamant and gold.  
 " There, bellowing engines with their fiery tubes  
 " Dispers'd ethereal Forms; and down they fell  
 " By thousands; Angels on Archangels roll'd;



of the fixth book of *Paradise Lost*; though at the same time there are many others, which that noble author has not taken notice of.

Milton, notwithstanding the sublime genius he was master of, has in this book drawn to his assistance all the helps he could meet with among the ancient poets. The sword of Michael, which makes so great a havock among the bad Angels, was given him, we are told, out of the armoury of God:

———— “ But the sword  
 “ Of Michael from the armoury of God  
 “ Was given him temper’d so, that neither keen  
 “ Nor solid might resist that edge: It met  
 “ The sword of Satan, with steep force to smite  
 “ Descending, and in half cut sheer —”

This passage is a copy of that in Virgil, wherein the poet tells us, that the sword of Æneas, which

“ Recover’d, to the hills they ran, they flew,  
 “ Which, (with their ponderous load, rocks, waters, woods,)  
 “ From their firm seats torn by the shaggy tops,  
 “ They bore like shields before them through the air,  
 “ Till more incens’d they hurl’d them at their foes.  
 “ All was confusion; Heaven’s foundation shook,  
 “ Threatening no less than universal wrack;  
 “ For Michael’s arm main promontories flung,  
 “ And over-press’d whole legions weak with sin;  
 “ Yet they blasphem’d, and struggled, as they lay;  
 “ Till the great ensign of Messiah blaz’d,  
 “ And, arm’d with vengeance, God’s victorious Son,  
 “ Effulgence of Paternal Deity,  
 “ Grasping ten thousand thunders in his hand,  
 “ Drove the old original rebels headlong down,  
 “ And sent them flaming to the vast abyss.”



was given him by a deity, broke into pieces the sword of Turnus, which came from a mortal forge. As the moral in this place is divine, so by the way we may observe that the bestowing on a man, who is favoured by Heaven, such an allegorical weapon, is very conformable to the old eastern way of thinking. Not only Homer has made use of it, but we find the Jewish hero in the book of Maccabees, who had fought the battles of the chosen people with so much glory and success, receiving in his dream a sword from the hand of the prophet Jeremiah. The passage, wherein Satan is described as wounded by the sword of Michael, is in imitation of Homer; who tells us, in the same manner, that, upon Diomedes wounding the gods, there flowed from the wound an ichor, or pure kind of blood, which was not bred from mortal viands; and that, though the pain was exquisitely great, the wound soon closed up and healed in those Beings who are vested with immortality.

I question not but Milton, in his description of his furious Moloch flying from the battle, and bellowing with the wound he had received, had his eye<sup>c</sup> on Mars in the *Iliad*; who, upon his being wounded, is represented as retiring out of the fight, and making an outcry louder than that

<sup>c</sup> on Mars in the *Iliad*;] Or perhaps on the Dragon wounded, in Spenser. See the Note, B. vi. 362.



of a whole army when it begins the charge. Homer adds, that the Greeks and Trojans, who were engaged in a general battle, were terrified on each side with the bellowing of this wounded deity. The reader will easily observe how Milton has kept all the horror of this image, without running into the ridicule of it.

Milton has likewise raised his description in this book with many images taken out of the poetical parts of Scripture. The Messiah's chariot, as I have before taken notice, is formed upon a vision of Ezekiel, who, as Grotius observes, has very much in him of Homer's spirit in the poetical parts of his prophecy.

The lines, in that glorious commission which is given the Messiah to extirpate the host of rebel Angels, are drawn from a sublime passage in the Psalms.

The reader will easily discover many other strokes of the same nature.

There is no question but Milton had heated his imagination with the fight of the gods in Homer, before he entered upon this engagement of the Angels. Homer there gives us a scene of men, heroes, and gods, mixed together in battle. Mars animates the contending armies, and lifts up his voice in such a manner, that it is heard distinctly amidst all the shouts and confusion of the fight. Jupiter at the same time thunders



over their heads ; while Neptune raises such a tempest, that the whole field of battle and all the tops of the mountains shake about them. The poet tells us, that Pluto himself, whose habitation was in the very center of the earth, was so affrighted at the shock, that he leaped from his throne. Homer afterwards describes Vulcan as pouring down a storm of fire upon the river Xanthus, and Minerva as throwing a rock at Mars ; who, he tells us, covered seven acres in his fall.

As Homer has introduced into his battle of the gods every thing that is great and terrible in nature, Milton has filled his fight of good and bad Angels with all the like circumstances of horror. The shout of armies, the rattling of brazen chariots, the hurling of rocks and mountains, the earthquake, the fire, the thunder, are all of them employed to lift up the reader's imagination, and give him a suitable idea of so great an action. With what art has the poet represented the whole body of the earth trembling, even before it was created ?

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“ All Heaven  
“ Resounded ; and had Earth been then, all Earth  
“ Had to her center shook — ”

In how sublime and just a manner does he afterwards describe the whole Heaven shaking under the wheels of the Messiah's chariot, with that exception of the throne of God ?



— “ Under his burning wheels  
 “ The stedfast empyrean shook throughout,  
 “ All but the throne itself of God —”

Notwithstanding the Messiah appears clothed with so much terrour and majesty, the poet has still found means to make his readers conceive an idea of him, beyond what he himself is able to describe :

“ Yet half his strength he put not forth, but check’d  
 “ His thunder in mid volley ; for he meant  
 “ Not to destroy, but root them out of Heaven.”

In a word, Milton’s genius, which was so great in itself, and <sup>d</sup> so strengthened by all the

<sup>d</sup> *so strengthened by all the helps of learning,*] This observation is illustrated with remarkable elegance and precision, in a printed but unpublished work, entitled “ *Curfory Remarks on some of the ancient English poets, particularly Milton, 1789,*” and attributed to Philip Neve, Esq<sup>r</sup>.—“ So true is Mr. Addison’s remark, that *perhaps never was a genius so strengthened by learning, as Milton’s*, that years might be spent in the examination of the *Paradise Lost*, without exhausting all its topicks of allusion to ancient and modern learning. Yet the constitution of Milton’s genius ; his creative powers ; the excursions of his imagination to regions, untraced by human pen, unexplored by human thought ; were gifts of nature, not effects of learning. Had his studies, by any fatality, been confined to an English version of the sacred Books, *Paradise Lost* had equally come forth, though with less ornament.

“ By this view of the genius of Milton may be decided the question, Whether Shakspeare’s powers would have been enlarged, or altered, by learning ? Shakspeare, as Dryden happily expresses himself, *was naturally learned*. His learning was above the study of books ; and by them he might, like Milton, have



helps of learning, appears in this book every way equal to his subject, which was the most

illustrated nature; have given variety to narration, or energy to allusion; but never have improved, through the knowledge of others, that first knowledge, which was peculiarly his own.

“ But the learning of Milton, though not the first subject of our admiration, is not to be passed over, without a degree of praise, to which perhaps no other scholar is entitled. To both the dialects of Hebrew he added the Greek, Latin, Italian, French, and Spanish; and these he possessed, not with study only, but commanded them in ordinary and familiar use. With these, aiding his own natural genius, he assumed a vigour of intellect, to which difficulties were temptations; that courted all that is arduous: that soared to divine counsels, without unworthiness; and met the majesty of Heaven, without amazement or confusion.

“ The energy of his mind, upon all occasions, shows itself such, that we make no allowances (because we find none necessary) for his situation. Yet the greatest work of human genius, his *Paradise Lost*, was not begun till he was blind. Had any one, possessing all the faculties of man without impair, executed this work, who would not say he had written with all nature present to his mind; that is, within the power of his mind, by help of that reference or revision, which connects science and retrieves learning? But of Milton,

————— from the cheerful ways of men  
Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair  
Presented with a universal blank  
Of nature's works to him expung'd and ras'd,  
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out —

more must be said: he wrote with all nature present to his memory.

“ That the praise of Milton is, like that of Cowley, to have no thought in common with any author, his predecessor, cannot be urged. Though he thought for himself, he had a just deference for the thoughts of others; and, though his genius enabled him



sublime that could enter into the thoughts of a poet. As he knew all the arts of affecting the mind, he knew it was necessary to give it certain resting places, and opportunities of recovering itself from time to time : he has therefore with great address interspersed several speeches, reflexions, similitudes, and the like reliefs to diversify his narration, and ease the attention of the reader, that he might come fresh to his great action ; and, by such a contrast of ideas, have a more lively taste of the nobler parts of his description. —

Longinus has observed, that there may be a loftiness in sentiments where there is no passion ;

without helps to execute, he disdained not to consult and direct himself by the most approved examples. In his Latin elegies, Ovid was his master : in his first essay in masque, Ben Jonson : in his Italian poems, Dante, Petrarca, and Fulvio Testi. It was his peculiar study to explore the traces of genius, in whatever authors had gone with eminence before him. He read them all. He took the golden ornaments from the hands of the best artists ; he considered their fashion, their workmanship, their weight, their alloy ; and, storing and arranging them for occasion, he adapted them, as he saw fit, to the chalice, or the pixis, formed from the sublime patterns of his own mind. Works of exquisite and wonderful invention ; which the most learned and the most ingenious are the first to admire ; but which themselves can never be imitated ! To form the *Paradise Lost*, what learning have the *sacred* or *classick* books, that has not been explored ? And what are the beauties or the excellencies of either, that he has not there assembled and combined ? 'Tis a temple, constructed to his own immortal fame, of the cedar of Lebanon, the gold of Ophir, and the marble of Paros."



and brings instances out of ancient authors to support this his opinion. The pathetick, as that great critick observes, may animate and inflame the sublime, but is not essential to it. Accordingly, as he further remarks, we very often find that those, who excel most in stirring up the passions, very often want the talent of writing in the great and sublime manner; and so on the contrary. Milton has shown himself a master in both these ways of writing. The SEVENTH BOOK, which we are now entering upon, is an instance of that sublime which is not mixed and worked up with passion. The author appears in a kind of composed and sedate majesty; and, though the sentiments do not give so great an emotion as those in the former book, they abound with as magnificent ideas. The sixth book, like a troubled ocean, represents greatness in confusion; the seventh affects the imagination like the ocean in a calm, and fills the mind of the reader, without producing in it any thing like tumult or agitation.

The critick above-mentioned, among the rules which he lays down for succeeding in the sublime way of writing, proposes to his reader, that he should imitate the most celebrated authors who have gone before him, and have been engaged in works of the same nature; as in particular, that, if he writes on a poetical sub-



ject, he should consider how Homer would have spoken on such an occasion. By this means, one great genius often catches the flame from another ; and writes in his spirit, without copying servilely after him. There are a thousand shining passages in Virgil, which have been lighted up by Homer.

Milton, though his own natural strength of genius was capable of furnishing out a perfect work, has doubtless very much raised and ennobled his conceptions by such an imitation as that which Longinus has recommended.

In this book, which gives us an account of the six days works, the poet received but very few assistances from heathen writers, who were strangers to the wonders of creation. But, as there are many glorious strokes of poetry upon this subject in Holy Writ, the author has numberless allusions to them through the whole course of this book. The great critick I have before mentioned, though an heathen, has taken notice of the sublime manner in which the law-giver of the Jews has described the creation in the first chapter of Genesis ; and there are many other passages in Scripture, which rise up to the same majesty, where this subject is touched upon. Milton has shown his judgement very remarkably, in making use of such of these as were proper for his Poem ; and in duly qua-



lifying those high strains of *Eastern* poetry, which were suited to readers whose imaginations were set to an higher pitch than those of colder climates.

Adam's speech to the Angel, wherein he desires an account of what had passed within the regions of Nature before the creation, is very great and solemn. The following lines, in which he tells him, that the day is not too far spent for him to enter upon such a subject, are exquisite in their kind :

“ And the great light of day yet wants to run  
“ Much of his race though steep ; suspense in Heaven,  
“ Held by thy voice, thy potent voice, he hears,  
“ And longer will delay to hear thee tell  
“ His generation, &c.”

The Angel's encouraging our first parents in a modest pursuit after knowledge, and the causes which he assigns for the creation of the world, are very just and beautiful. The Messiah, by whom, as we are told in Scripture, the heavens were made, comes forth in the power of his Father ; surrounded with an host of Angels, and clothed with such a Majesty as becomes his entering upon a work, which, according to our conceptions, appears the utmost exertion of Omnipotence. What a beautiful description has our author raised upon that hint in one of the prophets ! “ *And behold there came four chariots*



*out from between two mountains, and the mountains were mountains of brass."*

" About his chariot numberless were pour'd  
" Cherub, and Seraph, Potentates, and Thrones,  
" And Virtues, winged Spirits, and chariots wing'd  
" From the armoury of God ; where stand of old  
" Myriads, between two brazen mountains lodg'd  
" Against a solemn day, harness'd at hand,  
" Celestial equipage ; and now came forth  
" Spontaneous, for within them Spirit liv'd,  
" Attendant on their Lord : Heaven open'd wide  
" Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound  
" On golden hinges moving —"

I have before taken notice of these chariots of God, and of these gates of Heaven ; and shall here only add, that Homer gives us the same idea of the latter, as opening of themselves ; though he afterwards takes off from it, by telling us, that the Hours first of all removed those prodigious heaps of clouds which lay as a barrier before them.

I do not know any thing in the whole Poem more sublime than the description which follows, where the Messiah is represented at the head of his Angels, as looking down into the chaos, calming its confusion, riding into the midst of it, and drawing the first out-line of the creation.

The thought of the golden compasses, ver. 225, is conceived altogether in Homer's spirit ; and is a very noble incident in this wonderful



description. Homer, when he speaks of the gods, ascribes to them several arms and instruments, with the same greatness of imagination: Let the reader only peruse the description of Minerva's *Ægis*, or buckler, in the fifth book, with her spear which would overturn whole squadrons, and her helmet that was sufficient to cover an army drawn out of an hundred cities. The golden compasses in the above-mentioned passage appear a very natural instrument in the hand of him, whom Plato somewhere calls the Divine Geometrician. As poetry delights in clothing abstracted ideas in allegories and sensible images, we find a magnificent description of the creation formed after the same manner in one of the prophets, wherein he describes the Almighty Architect as measuring the waters in the hollow of his hand, meting out the heavens with his span, comprehending the dust of the earth in a measure, weighing the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance. Another of them, describing the Supreme Being in this great work of creation, represents him as laying the foundations of the earth, and stretching a line upon it: And in another place as garnishing the heavens, stretching out the north over the empty place, and hanging the earth upon nothing. This last noble thought Milton has expressed in the following verse:



“ And Earth self-balanc’d on her center hung.”

The beauties of description in this book lie so very thick, that it is impossible to enumerate them in these remarks. The poet has employed on them the whole energy of our tongue. The several great scenes of the creation rise up to view one after another, in such a manner that the reader seems present at this wonderful work, and to assist among the choirs of Angels, who are the spectators of it. How glorious is the conclusion of the first day !

—— “ Thus was the first day even and morn :  
“ Nor past uncelebrated, nor unsung  
“ By the celestial quires, when orient light  
“ Exhaling first from darkness they beheld ;  
“ Birth-day of Heaven and Earth ; with joy and shout  
“ The hollow universal orb they fill’d.”

We have the same elevation of thought in the third day, when the mountains were brought forth, and the deep was made. We have also the rising of the whole vegetable world described in this day’s work, which is filled with all the graces that other poets have lavished on their description of the spring, and leads the reader’s imagination into a theatre equally surprising and beautiful.

The several glories of the heavens make their appearance on the fourth day.



One would wonder how the poet could be so concise in his description of the six days works, as to comprehend them within the bounds of an episode ; and at the same time so particular, as to give us a lively idea of them. This is still more remarkable in his account of the fifth and sixth days, in which he has drawn out to our view the whole animal creation, from the reptile to the behemoth. As the lion and the leviathan are two of the noblest productions in the world of living creatures, the reader will find a most exquisite spirit of poetry in the account which our author gives us of them. The sixth day concludes with the formation of Man ; upon which the Angel takes occasion, as he did after the battle in Heaven, to remind Adam of his obedience ; which was the principal design of this his visit.

The poet afterwards represents the Messiah returning into Heaven, and taking a survey of his great work. There is something inexpressibly sublime in this part of the Poem, where the author describes the great period of time, filled with so many glorious circumstances ; when the heavens and earth were finished : when the Messiah ascended up in triumph through the everlasting gates ; when he looked down with pleasure upon his new creation ; when every part of nature seemed to rejoice in



its existence ; when the morning-stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.

I cannot conclude this book upon the creation, without mentioning <sup>c</sup> a poem which has lately appeared under that title. The work was undertaken with so good an intention, and is executed with so great a mastery, that it deserves to be looked upon as one of the most useful and noble productions in our English verse. The reader cannot but be pleased to find the depths of philosophy enlivened with all the charms of poetry ; and to see so great a strength of reason, amidst so beautiful a redundancy of the imagination. The author has shown us that design in all the works of nature, which necessarily leads us to the knowledge of its first cause. In short, he has illustrated, by numberless and incontestible instances, that divine wisdom, which the Son of Sirach has so nobly ascribed to the Supreme Being in his formation of the world, when he tells us, that “ *He created her, and saw her, and numbered her, and poured her out upon all his works.* ”—

<sup>c</sup> a poem which has lately appeared &c.] This was *The Creation* by Sir Richard Blackmore, published in 1712 ; a poem, says Dr. Johnson, which, “ if he had written nothing else, would have transmitted him to posterity among the first favourites of the English Muse.” See *Lives of the Eng. Poets*, edit. 1794, vol. iii. p. 72.



The accounts, which Raphael gives of the battle of angels and the creation of the world, have in them those qualifications which the criticks judge requisite to an episode. They are nearly related to the principal action, and have a just connexion with the fable.

The EIGHTH BOOK opens with a beautiful description of the impression which this discourse of the Archangel made on our first parents. Adam afterwards, by a very natural curiosity, inquires concerning the motions of those celestial bodies which make the most glorious appearance among the six days works. The poet here, with a great deal of art, represents Eve as withdrawing, from this part of their conversation, to amusements more suitable to her sex. He well knew that the episode in this book, which is filled with Adam's account of his passion and esteem for Eve, would have been improper for her hearing; and has therefore devised very just and beautiful reasons for her retiring.

The Angel's returning a doubtful answer to Adam's inquiries was not only proper for the moral reason which the poet assigns, but because it would have been highly absurd to have given the sanction of an Archangel to any particular system of philosophy. The chief points in the Ptolemaick and Copernican hypotheses are described with great conciseness and perspicuity,



and at the same time dressed in very pleasing and poetical images.

Adam, to detain the Angel, enters afterwards upon his own history, and relates to him the circumstances in which he found himself upon his creation ; as also his conversation with his Maker, and his first meeting with Eve. There is no part of the Poem more apt to raise the attention of the reader, than this discourse of our great ancestor ; as nothing can be more surprising and delightful to us, than to hear the sentiments that arose in the first Man, while he was yet new and fresh from the hands of his Creator. The poet has interwoven every thing which is delivered upon this subject in Holy Writ with so many beautiful imaginations of his own, that nothing can be conceived more just and natural than this whole episode. As our author knew this subject could not but be agreeable to his reader, he would not throw it into the relation of the six days works, but reserved it for a distinct episode, that he might have an opportunity of expatiating upon it more at large. Before I enter on this part of the Poem, I cannot but take notice of two shining passages in the dialogue between Adam and the Angel. The first is that wherein our ancestor gives an account of the pleasure he took in conversing with him, which contains a very noble moral :



" For, while I sit with thee, I seem in Heaven ;  
 " And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear  
 " Than fruits of palm-tree pleasantest to thirst  
 " And hunger both, from labour, at the hour  
 " Of sweet repast ; they satiate, and soon fill,  
 " Though pleasant ; but thy words, with grace divine  
 " Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety."

The other I shall mention, is that in which the Angel gives a reason why he should be glad to hear the story Adam was about to relate :

" For I that day was absent, as befel,  
 " Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure,  
 " Far on excursion towards the gates of Hell ;  
 " Squar'd in full legion (such command we had)  
 " To see that none thence issued forth a spy,  
 " Or enemy, while God was in his work ;  
 " Lest he, incens'd at such eruption bold,  
 " Destruction with Creation might have mix'd."

There is no question but our poet drew the image in what follows from that in Virgil's sixth book, where Æneas and the Sybil stand before the adamantine gates, which are there described as shut upon the place of torments ; and listen to the groans, the clank of chains, and the noise of iron whips, that were heard in those regions of pain and sorrow :

——— " Fast we found, fast shut,  
 " The dismal gates, and barricado'd strong ;  
 " But long ere our approaching heard within  
 " Noise, other than the sound of dance or song,  
 " Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage."



Adam then proceeds to give an account of his condition and sentiments immediately after his creation. How agreeably does he represent the posture in which he found himself, the delightful landskip that surrounded him, and the gladness of heart which grew up in him on that occasion ! He is afterwards described as surprised at his own existence, and taking a survey of himself, and of all the works of nature. He likewise is represented as discovering, by the light of reason, that he, and every thing about him, must have been the effect of some Being infinitely good and powerful ; and that this Being had a right to his worship and adoration. His first address to the sun, and to those parts of the creation which made the most distinguished figure, is very natural and amusing to the imagination. His next sentiment, when upon his first going to sleep he fancies himself losing his existence, and falling away into nothing, can never be sufficiently admired. His dream, in which he still preserves the consciousness of his existence, and his removal into the garden which was prepared for his reception, are also circumstances finely imagined, and grounded upon what is delivered in sacred story.

These, and the like wonderful, incidents in this part of the work, have in them all the



beauties of novelty ; at the same time that they have all the graces of nature.

They are such as none but a great genius could have thought of ; though, upon the perusal of them, they seem to rise of themselves from the subject of which he treats. In a word, though they are natural, they are not obvious ; which is the true character of all fine writing.

The impression, which the interdiction of the tree of life left in the mind of our first parent, is described with great strength and judgement ; as the image of the several beasts and birds passing in review before him is very beautiful and lively.

Adam, in the next place, describes a conference which he held with his Maker upon the subject of solitude. The poet here represents the Supreme Being, as making an essay of his own work, and putting to the trial that reasoning faculty with which he had endued his creature. Adam urges, in this divine colloquy, the impossibility of his being happy, though he was the inhabitant of Paradise, and Lord of the whole creation, without the conversation and society of some rational creature, who should partake those blessings with him. This dialogue, which is supported chiefly by the beauty of the thoughts, without other poetical orna-



ments, is as fine a part as any in the whole Poem: The more the reader examines the justness and delicacy of its sentiments, the more he will find himself pleased with it. The poet has wonderfully preserved the character of majesty and condescension in the Creator, and at the same time that of humility and adoration in the creature, as particularly in the following lines :

- “ Thus I presumptuous ; and the Vision bright,  
“ As with a smile more brighten’d, thus replied, &c.”  
—— “ I, with leave of speech implor’d,  
“ And humble deprecation, thus replied.  
“ Let not my words offend thee, heavenly Power,  
“ My Maker, be propitious while I speak, &c.”

Adam then proceeds to give an account of his second sleep, and of the dream in which he beheld the formation of Eve. The new passion that was awakened in him at the sight of her, is touched very finely :

- “ Under his forming hands a creature grew,  
“ Man-like, but different sex ; so lovely fair,  
“ That what seem’d fair in all the world, seem’d now  
“ Mean, or in her summ’d up, in her contain’d,  
“ And in her looks ; which from that time infus’d  
“ Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before,  
“ And into all things from her air inspir’d  
“ The spirit of love and amorous delight.”

Adam’s distress upon losing sight of this beautiful phantom, with his exclamations of joy and gratitude at the discovery of a real



creature who resembled the apparition which had been presented to him in his dream ; the approaches he makes to her ; and his manner of courtship ; are all laid together in a most exquisite propriety of sentiments.

Though this part of the Poem is worked up with great warmth and spirit, the love which is described in it is every way suitable to a state of innocence. If the reader compares the description which Adam here gives of his leading Eve to the nuptial bower, with that which Mr. Dryden has made on the same occasion in a scene of his *Fall of Man*, he will be sensible of the great care which Milton took to avoid all thoughts on so delicate a subject that might be offensive to religion or good-manners. The sentiments are chaste, but not cold ; and convey to the mind ideas of the most transporting passion, and of the greatest purity. What a noble mixture of rapture and innocence has the author joined together, in the reflection which Adam makes on the pleasures of love, compared to those of sense !

These sentiments of love in our first parent, give the Angel such an insight into human nature, that he seems apprehensive of the evils which might befall the species in general, as well as Adam in particular, from the excess of this passion. He therefore fortifies him against



it by timely admonitions ; which very artfully prepare the mind of the reader for the occurrences of the next book, where the weakness, of which Adam here gives such distant discoveries, brings about that fatal event which is the subject of the Poem. His discourse, which follows the gentle rebuke he received from the Angel, shows that his love, however violent it might appear, was still founded in reason, and consequently not improper for Paradise.

Adam's speech, at parting with the Angel, has in it a deference and gratitude agreeable to an inferiour nature ; and at the same time a certain dignity and greatness, suitable to the father of mankind in his state of innocence.—

-If we look into the three great heroick poems which have appeared in the world, we may observe that they are built upon very slight foundations. Homer lived near 300 years after the Trojan war ; and, as the writing of history was not then in use among the Greeks, we may very well suppose, that the tradition of Achilles and Ulysses had brought down but very few particulars to his knowledge ; though there is no question but he has wrought into his two poems such of their remarkable adventures, as were still talked of among his contemporaries.

The story of Æneas, on which Virgil founded his poem, was likewise very bare of circum-



stances ; and by that means afforded him an opportunity of embellishing it with fiction, and giving a full range to his own invention. We find, however, that he has interwoven, in the course of his fable, the principal particulars, which were generally believed among the Romans, of Æneas's voyage and settlement in Italy.

The reader may find an abridgement of the whole story as collected out of the ancient Historians, and as it was received among the Romans, in Dionysius Halicarnassæus.

Since none of the criticks have considered Virgil's fable, with relation to this history of Æneas ; it may not perhaps be amiss to examine it in this light, so far as regards my present purpose. Whoever looks into the abridgement abovementioned, will find that the character of Æneas is filled with piety to the gods, and a superstitious observation of prodigies, oracles, and predictions. Virgil has not only preserved this character in the person of Æneas, but has given a place in his poem to those particular prophecies which he found recorded of him in history and tradition. The poet took the matters of fact as they came down to him ; and circumstanced them after his own manner, to make them appear the more natural, agreeable, or surprising. I believe very many readers have been



shocked at that ludicrous prophecy, which one of the Harpies pronounces to the Trojans in the third book ; namely, that, before they had built their intended city, they should be reduced by hunger to eat their very tables. But, when they hear that this was one of the circumstances that had been transmitted to the Romans in the history of Æneas, they will think the poet did very well in taking notice of it. The historian above-mentioned acquaints us, a prophetess had foretold Æneas, that he should take his voyage westward, till his companions should eat their tables ; and that accordingly, upon his landing in Italy, as they were eating their flesh upon cakes of bread for want of other conveniencies, they afterwards fed on the cakes themselves ; upon which one of the company said merrily, “ *We are eating our tables.*” They immediately took the hint, says the historian, and concluded the prophecy to be fulfilled. As Virgil did not think it proper to omit so material a particular in the history of Æneas, it may be worth while to consider with how much judgement he has qualified it, and taken off every thing that might have appeared improper for a passage in an heroick poem. The prophetess, who foretells it, is an hungry Harpy, as the person who discovers it is young Ascanius.

“ *Heus etiam menfas consumimus, inquit Iulus !*”



Such an observation, which is beautiful in the mouth of a boy, would have been ridiculous from any other of the company. I am apt to think that the changing of the Trojan fleet into Water-Nymphs, which is the most violent machine in the whole *Æneid*, and has given offence to several criticks, may be accounted for the same way. Virgil himself, before he begins that relation, premises, that what he was going to tell appeared incredible, but that it was justified by tradition. What further confirms me that this change of the fleet was a celebrated circumstance in the history of *Æneas*, is, that Ovid has given a place to the same metamorphosis in his account of the heathen mythology.

None of the criticks I have met with having considered the fable of the *Æneid* in this light, and taken notice how the tradition, on which it was founded, authorises those parts in it which appear more exceptionable; I hope the length of this reflection will not make it unacceptable to the curious part of my readers.

The history, which was the basis of Milton's Poem, is still shorter than either that of the *Iliad*, or *Æneid*. The poet has likewise taken care to insert every circumstance of it in the body of his fable. The NINTH BOOK, which we are here to consider, is raised upon that brief account in Scripture, wherein we are told that the serpent



was more subtle than any beast of the field ; that he tempted the Woman to eat of the forbidden fruit ; that she was overcome by this temptation ; and that Adam followed her example. From these few particulars, Milton has formed one of the most entertaining fables that invention ever produced. He has disposed of these several circumstances among so many agreeable and natural fictions of his own, that his whole story looks only like a comment upon Sacred Writ, or rather seems to be a full and complete relation of what the other is only an epitome. I have insisted the longer on this consideration, as I look upon the disposition and contrivance of the fable to be the principal beauty of the ninth book, which has more *story* in it, and is fuller of incidents, than any other in the whole Poem. Satan's traversing the globe, and still keeping within the shadow of the night, as fearing to be discovered by the Angel of the sun, who had before detected him, is one of those beautiful imaginations with which he introduces this his second series of adventures. Having examined the nature of every creature, and found out one which was the most proper for his purpose, he again returns to Paradise ; and, to avoid discovery, sinks by night with a river that ran under the garden, and rises up again through a fountain that issued from it by the tree of life.



The poet, who, as we have before taken notice, speaks as little as possible in his own person, and, after the example of Homer, fills every part of his work with manners and characters, introduces a soliloquy of this infernal agent, who was thus restless in the destruction of Man. He is then described as gliding through the garden, under the resemblance of a mist, in order to find out that creature in which he designed to tempt our first parents. This description has something in it very poetical and surprising.

The author afterwards gives us a description of the morning, which is wonderfully suitable to a divine poem, and peculiar to that first season of nature: He represents the Earth, before it was cursed, as a great altar, breathing out its incense from all parts, and sending up a pleasant favour to the nostrils of its Creator; to which he adds a noble idea of Adam and Eve, as offering their morning worship, and filling up the universal consort of praise and adoration.

The dispute, which follows between our two first parents, is represented with great art: It proceeds from a difference of judgement, not of passion; and is managed with reason, not with heat: It is such a dispute as we may suppose might have happened in Paradise, had Man continued happy and innocent. There is a great delicacy in the moralities which are interspersed



in Adam's discourse, and which the most ordinary reader cannot but take notice of. That force of love, which the father of mankind so finely describes in the eighth book, shows itself here in many fine instances: As in those fond regards he casts towards Eve at her parting from him; in his impatience and amusement during her absence; but particularly in that passionate speech, where, seeing her irrecoverably lost, he resolves to perish with her rather than to live without her:

————— “ Some cursed fraud  
“ Of enemy hath beguil'd thee, yet unknown,  
“ And me with thee hath ruin'd; for with thee  
“ Certain my resolution is to die:  
“ How can I live without thee! how forego  
“ Thy sweet converse, and love so dearly join'd,  
“ To live again in these wild woods forlorn!  
“ Should God create another Eve, and I  
“ Another rib afford, yet loss of thee  
“ Would never from my heart; no, no! I feel  
“ The link of nature draw me: flesh of flesh,  
“ Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state  
“ Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe!”

The beginning of this speech, and the preparation to it, are animated with the same spirit as the conclusion, which I have here quoted.

The several wiles which are put in practice by the Tempter, when he found Eve separated from her husband; the many pleasing images of nature which are intermixed in this part of the story, with its gradual and regular progress to the fatal



catastrophe; are so very remarkable, that it would be superfluous to point out their respective beauties.

I have avoided mentioning any particular similitudes in my remarks on this great work, because I have given a general account of them in my observations on the first book. There is one, however, in this part of the Poem, which I shall here quote, as it is not only very beautiful, but the closest of any in the whole Poem; I mean that, where the serpent is described as rolling forward in all his pride, animated by the evil Spirit, and conducting Eve to her destruction, while Adam was at too great a distance from her to give her his assistance. These several particulars are all of them wrought into the following similitude.

---

“ Hope elevates, and joy  
 “ Brightens his crest; as when a wandering fire,  
 “ Compact of unctuous vapour, which the night  
 “ Condenses, and the cold environs round,  
 “ Kindled through agitation to a flame,  
 “ Which oft, they say, some evil Spirit attends,  
 “ Hovering and blazing with delusive light,  
 “ Misleads the amaz'd night-wanderer from his way  
 “ To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool;  
 “ There swallow'd up and lost, from succour far.”

That secret intoxication of pleasure, with all those transient flushings of guilt and joy, which the poet represents in our first parents upon their eating the forbidden fruit, to those flaggings of



spirit, damps of sorrow, and mutual accusations which succeed it, are conceived with a wonderful imagination, and described in very natural sentiments.

When Dido, in the fourth *Æneid*, yielded to that fatal temptation which ruined her, Virgil tells us the Earth trembled, the Heavens were filled with flashes of lightning, and the Nymphs howled upon the mountain tops. Milton, in the same poetical spirit, has described all Nature as disturbed upon Eve's eating the forbidden fruit.

Upon Adam's falling into the same guilt, the whole Creation appears a second time in convulsions.

As all Nature suffered by the guilt of our first parents, these symptoms of trouble and consternation are wonderfully imagined, not only as prodigies, but as marks of her sympathizing in the Fall of Man.

Adam's converse with Eve, after having eaten the forbidden fruit, is an exact copy of that between Jupiter and Juno in the fourteenth *Iliad*. Juno there approaches Jupiter with the girdle which she had received from Venus; upon which he tells her, that she appeared more charming and desirable than she had ever done before, even when their loves were at the highest. The poet afterwards describes them as reposing on a summit of mount Ida, which produced under them



a bed of flowers, the lotos, the crocus, and the hyacinth ; and concludes his description with their falling asleep.

Let the reader compare this with the following passage in Milton, which begins with Adam's speech to Eve :

- " For never did thy beauty, since the day
- " I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorn'd
- " With all perfections, so inflame my sense
- " With ardour to enjoy thee, fairer now
- " Than ever, bounty of this virtuous tree !
- " So said he, and forbore not glance or toy
- " Of amorous intent ; well understood
- " Of Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire.
- " Her hand he seis'd ; and to a shady bank,
- " Thick over-head with verdant roof imbower'd,
- " He led her nothing loth ; flowers were the couch,
- " Pansies, and violets, and asphodel,
- " And hyacinth ; Earth's freshest softest lap.
- " There they their fill of love and love's disport
- " Took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal,
- " The solace of their sin ; till dewy sleep
- " Oppress'd them —"

As no poet seems ever to have studied Homer more, or to have resembled him in the greatness of genius, than Milton ; I think I should have given but a very imperfect account of his beauties, if I had not observed the most remarkable passages which look like parallels in these two great authors. I might, in the course of this criticism, have taken notice of many particular lines and expressions which are translated from



the Greek poet ; but, as I thought this would have appeared too minute and over-curious, I have purposely omitted them. The greater incidents, however, are not only set off by being shown in the same light with several of the same nature in Homer, but by that means may be also guarded against the cavils of the tasteless or ignorant.—

The TENTH BOOK of *Paradise Lost* has a greater variety of persons in it than any other in the whole Poem. The author, upon the winding up of his action, introduces all those who had any concern in it ; and shows, with great beauty, the influence which it had upon each of them. It is like the last act of a well-written tragedy ; in which all, who had a part in it, are generally drawn up before the audience, and represented under those circumstances in which the determination of the action places them.

I shall therefore consider this book under four heads, in relation to the celestial, the infernal, the human, and the imaginary, persons ; who have their respective parts allotted in it.

To begin with the celestial persons : The guardian Angels of Paradise are described as returning to Heaven upon the Fall of Man, in order to approve their vigilance ; their arrival, their manner of reception, with the sorrow which appeared in themselves, and in those Spirits who are said to rejoice at the conversion of a sinner, are



very finely laid together in the beginning of this book.

The same Divine Person, who in the foregoing parts of this Poem interceded for our first parents before their Fall, overthrew the rebel Angels, and created the world, is now represented as descending to Paradise, and pronouncing sentence upon the three offenders. The cool of the evening being a circumstance with which Holy Writ introduces this great scene, it is poetically described by our author; who has also kept religiously to the form of words, in which the three several sentences were passed upon Adam, Eve, and the serpent. He has rather chosen to neglect the numerousness of his verse, than to deviate from those speeches which are recorded on this great occasion. The guilt and confusion of our first parents standing naked before their judge, is touched with great beauty. Upon the arrival of Sin and Death into the works of the creation, the Almighty is again introduced as speaking to his Angels that surrounded him:

“ See, with what heat these dogs of hell advance

“ To waste and havock yonder world, which I

“ So fair and good created; &c.”

The following passage is formed upon that glorious image in Holy Writ, which compares the voice of an innumerable host of Angels, uttering hallelujahs, to the voice of mighty thunders, or of many waters:



“ He ended, and the heavenly audience loud  
 “ Sung hallelujah, as the sound of seas,  
 “ Through multitude that sung : Just are thy ways,  
 “ Righteous are thy decrees in all thy works ;  
 “ Who can extenuate thee ? —”

Though the author in the whole course of his Poem, and particularly in the book we are now examining, has infinite allusions to places of Scripture, I have only taken notice in my remarks of such as are of a poetical nature, and which are woven with great beauty into the body of this fable. Of this kind is that passage in the present book, where, describing Sin as marching through the works of nature, he adds,

————— “ Behind her Death  
 “ Close following pace for pace, not mounted yet  
 “ On his pale horse —”

Which alludes to that passage in Scripture so wonderfully poetical, and terrifying to the imagination. “ *And I looked and behold a pale horse, and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him : and power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with sickness, and with the beasts of the earth.*” Under this first head of celestial persons we must likewise take notice of the command which the Angels received, to produce the several changes in nature, and fully the beauty of the creation. Accordingly they are represented as infecting the stars, and



planets, with malignant influences ; weakening the light of the sun ; bringing down the winter into the milder regions of nature ; planting winds, and storms, in several quarters of the sky ; storing the clouds with thunder ; and, in short, perverting the whole frame of the universe to the condition of its criminal inhabitants. As this is a noble incident in the Poem, the following lines in which we see the Angels heaving up the earth, and placing it in a different posture to the sun from what it had before the Fall of Man, is conceived with that sublime imagination which was so peculiar to this great author.

“ Some say he bid his Angels turn ascanse

“ The poles of earth twice ten degrees and more

“ From the sun's axle ; they with labour push'd

“ Oblique the centrick globe.—”

We are in the second place to consider the infernal agents under the view which Milton has given us of them in this book. It is observed by those who would set forth the greatness of Virgil's plan, that he conducts his reader through all the parts of the earth which were discovered in his time. Asia, Africa, and Europe, are the several scenes of his fable. The plan of Milton's Poem is of an infinitely greater extent, and fills the mind with many more astonishing circumstances. Satan, having surrounded the earth seven times, departs at length from Paradise. We then see him steering his course among the



constellations, and, after having traversed the whole creation, pursuing his voyage through the chaos, and entering into his own infernal dominions.

His first appearance in the assembly of fallen Angels, is worked up with circumstances which give a delightful surprise to the reader : but there is no incident in the whole Poem which does this more than the transformation of the whole audience, that follows the account their leader gives them of his expedition. The gradual change of Satan himself is described after Ovid's manner, and may vie with any of those celebrated transformations which are looked upon as the most beautiful parts in that poet's works. Milton never fails of improving his own hints, and bestowing the last finishing touches, in every incident which is admitted into his Poem. The unexpected hiss which arises in this episode ; the dimensions and bulk of Satan, so much superiour to those of the infernal Spirits who lay under the same transformation, with the annual change which they are supposed to suffer ; are instances of this kind. The beauty of the diction is very remarkable in this whole episode, as I have before observed the great judgement with which it was contrived.

The parts of Adam and Eve, or the human persons, come next under our consideration. Mil-



ton's art is no where more shown than in his conducting the parts of these our first parents. The representation he gives of them, without falsifying the story, is wonderfully contrived to influence the reader with pity and compassion towards them. Though Adam involves the whole species in misery, his crime proceeds from a weakness which every man is inclined to pardon and commiserate, as it seems rather the frailty of human nature, than of the person who offended. Every one is apt to excuse a fault which he himself might have fallen into. It was the excess of love for Eve, that ruined Adam, and his posterity. I need not add, that the author is justified in this particular by many of the fathers, and the most orthodox writers. Milton has by this means filled a great part of his Poem with that kind of writing which the French criticks call the *tender*, and which is in a particular manner engaging to all sorts of readers.

Adam and Eve, in the book we are now considering, are likewise drawn with such sentiments as do not only interest the reader in their afflictions, but raise in him the most melting passions of humanity and commiseration. When Adam sees the several changes of nature produced about him, he appears in a disorder of mind suitable to one who had forfeited both his innocence and his happiness; he is filled with horror, remorse,



despair : in the anguish of his heart he expostulates with his Creator for having given him an unasked existence.

He immediately after recovers from his presumption, owns his doom to be just, and begs that the death which is threatened him may be inflicted on him.

The whole speech is full of the like emotion, and varied with all those sentiments which we may suppose natural to a mind so broken and disturbed. I must not omit that generous concern which our first father shows in it for his posterity, and which is so proper to affect the reader :

————— “ Hide me from the face  
 “ Of God, whom to behold was then my highth  
 “ Of happiness ! Yet well, if here would end  
 “ The misery ; I deserv’d it, and would bear  
 “ My own deservings ; but this will not serve :  
 “ All that I eat, or drink, or shall beget,  
 “ Is propagated curse. O voice, once heard  
 “ Delightfully, *Encrease and multiply* ;  
 “ Now death to hear ! —————

————— “ In me all  
 “ Posterity stands curs’d : Fair patrimony,  
 “ That I must leave ye, Sons ! O, were I able  
 “ To waste it all myself, and leave ye none !  
 “ So disinherited, how would you bless  
 “ Me, now your curse ! Ah, why should all mankind,  
 “ For one man’s fault, thus guiltless be condemn’d,  
 “ If guiltless ? But from me what can proceed,  
 “ But all corrupt ? —”



Who can afterwards behold the father of mankind, extended upon the earth, uttering his midnight complaints, bewailing his existence, and wishing for death, without sympathizing with him in his distress?—The part of Eve in this book is no less passionate, and apt to sway the reader in her favour. She is represented with great tenderness as approaching Adam, but is spurned from him with a spirit of upbraiding and indignation, conformable to the nature of man, whose passions had now gained the dominion over him. The following passage, wherein she is described as renewing her addresses to him, with the whole speech that follows it, have something in them exquisitely moving and pathetic.

- “ He added not, and from her turn’d; But Eve,  
 “ Not so repuls’d, with tears that ceas’d not flowing  
 “ And tresses all disorder’d, at his feet  
 “ Fell humble; and, embracing them, besought  
 “ His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint.  
 “ Forfake me not thus, Adam! Witness Heaven  
 “ What love sincere, and reverence in my heart  
 “ I bear thee, and unweeting have offended,  
 “ Unhappily deceiv’d! Thy suppliant  
 “ I beg, and clasp thy knees; bereave me not,  
 “ Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,  
 “ Thy counsel, in this uttermost distress,  
 “ My only strength and stay: Forlorn of thee,  
 “ Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?  
 “ While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,  
 “ Between us two let there be peace; &c.”



Adam's reconciliation to her is worked up in the same spirit of tenderness. Eve afterwards proposes to her husband, in the blindness of her despair, that, to prevent their guilt from descending upon posterity, they should resolve to live childless; or, if that could not be done, they should seek their own deaths by violent methods. As those sentiments naturally engage the reader to regard the mother of mankind with more than ordinary commiseration, <sup>b</sup> they likewise contain a very fine moral. The resolution of dying to end our miseries, does not show such a degree of magnanimity as a resolution to bear them, and submit to the dispensations of Providence. Our author has therefore, with great delicacy, represented Eve as entertaining this thought, and Adam as disapproving it.

<sup>b</sup> *they likewise contain a very fine moral.*] Milton frequently takes occasion to recommend "the bearing well of all calamities; extolling patience as the truest fortitude." How would his pious spirit have been grieved, if he had lived to mark the profligacy of those, who, thinking of themselves more highly than they ought to think, have, in modern times, affected to despise the Christian lesson which he teaches; who have defended even the guilt of suicide, and proclaimed the eternity of death! See the Note on *Par. Lost*, B. xii. 434.—Milton's moral is indeed sublime: It "raises the attentive mind" (as Adam's mind was raised) "to better hopes" than the thought of self-destruction in distress and misery: It teaches us to await, in awful expectation, our last hour; and humbly to seek, in the mercy of God, a "remedy to the evils which our own misdeeds have wrought."

It is remarkable that, in the *Adamo* of Andreini, Eve tempts Adam to suicide, A. iv. S. v.



We are, in the last place, to consider the imaginary persons, or Death and Sin, who act a large part in this book. Such beautiful extended allegories are certainly some of the finest compositions of genius ; but, as I have before observed, are not agreeable to the nature of an heroick poem. This of Sin and Death is very exquisite in its kind, if not considered as a part of such a work. The truths contained in it are so clear and open, that I shall not lose time in explaining them ; but shall only observe, that a reader, who knows the strength of the English tongue, will be amazed to think how the poet could find such apt words and phrases to describe the actions of those two imaginary persons, and particularly in that part where Death is exhibited as forming a bridge over the chaos ; a work suitable to the genius of Milton.

Since the subject I am upon gives me an opportunity of speaking more at large of such shadowy and imaginary persons as may be introduced into heroick poems, I shall beg leave to explain myself in a matter which is curious in its kind, and which none of the critics have treated of. It is certain, Homer and Virgil are full of imaginary persons ; who are very beautiful in poetry, when they are just shown without being engaged in any series of action. Homer indeed represents Sleep as a person, and



ascribes a short part to him in his *Iliad*; but we must consider, that, though we now regard such a person as entirely shadowy and unsubstantial, the Heathens made statues of him, placed him in their temples, and looked upon him as a real deity. When Homer makes use of other such allegorical persons, it is only in short expressions, which convey an ordinary thought to the mind in the most pleasing manner, and may rather be looked upon as poetical phrases, than allegorical descriptions. Instead of telling us that men naturally fly when they are terrified, he introduces the persons of Flight and Fear, who, he tells us, are inseparable companions. Instead of saying that the time was come when Apollo ought to have received his recompence, he tells us, that the Hours brought him his reward. Instead of describing the effects which Minerva's *Ægis* produced in battle, he tells us that the brims of it were encompassed by Terrour, Rout, Discord, Fury, Pursuit, Massacre, and Death. In the same figure of speaking, he represents Victory as following Diomedes; Discord as the mother of funerals and mourning; Venus as dressed by the Graces; Bellona as wearing terrour and consternation like a garment. I might give several other instances out of Homer, as well as a great many out of Virgil. Milton has likewise very often made use of the same way of speaking, as



where he tells us, that Victory sat on the right hand of the Messiah, when he marched forth against the rebel Angels ; that, at the rising of the sun, the Hours unbarred the gates of light ; that Discord was the daughter of Sin. Of the same nature are those expressions, where, describing the singing of the nightingale, he adds, “ *Silence was pleased ;*” and, upon the Messiah’s bidding peace to the chaos, “ *Confusion heard his voice.*” I might add innumerable instances of our poet’s writing in this beautiful figure. It is plain that these I have mentioned, in which persons of an imaginary nature are introduced, are such short allegories as are not designed to be taken in the literal sense, but only to convey particular circumstances to the reader, after an unusual and entertaining manner. But when such persons are introduced as principal actors, and engaged in a series of adventures, they take too much upon them ; and are by no means proper for an heroick poem, which ought to appear credible in its principal parts. I cannot forbear therefore thinking that Sin and Death<sup>e</sup> are as improper agents in a work of this na-

<sup>e</sup> *are as improper agents in a work of this nature, &c.]* Yet, as doctor Newton has observed, “ Milton may rather be justified for introducing such imaginary beings as Sin and Death, because a great part of his Poem lies in the invisible world, and such fictitious beings may better have a place there ; and the actions of Sin and Death are at least as probable as those ascribed to the



ture, as Strength and Necessity in one of the tragedies of Æschylus, who represented those two persons nailing down Prometheus to a rock ; for which he has been justly censured by the greatest criticks. I do not know any imaginary person made use of in a more sublime manner of thinking than that in one of the prophets, who, describing God as descending from Heaven and visiting the sins of mankind, adds that dreadful circumstance, “ *Before him went the Pestilence.*” It is certain, this imaginary person might have been described in all her purple spots. The Fever might have marched before her, Pain might have stood at her right hand, Phrenzy on her left, and Death in her rear. She might have been introduced as gliding down from the tail of a comet, or darted from the earth in a flash of lightning : She might have tainted the atmosphere with her breath ; the very glaring of her eyes might have scattered infection. But I

good or evil Angels. Besides, as Milton’s subject necessarily admitted so few real persons, he was in a manner obliged to supply that defect by introducing imaginary ones ; and the characters of Sin and Death are perfectly agreeable to the hints and sketches, which are given of them in Scripture. The Scripture had made persons of them before in several places ; only the Scripture has represented them as I may say in miniature, and he has drawn them in their full length and proportions.” He has also exactly followed the genealogy of Sin and Death, as described by St. James. See the Note on *Par. Lost*, B. ii. 648. The Poem, therefore, may be considered as free from the imperfection with which it has been charged. See also before, p. 89.



believe every reader will think, that in such sublime writings the mentioning of her, as it is done in Scripture, has something in it more just, as well as great, than all that the most fanciful poet could have bestowed upon her in the richness of his imagination.—

Milton has shown a wonderful art in describing that variety of passions, which arose in our first parents upon the breach of the commandment that had been given them. We see them gradually passing from the triumph of their guilt through remorse, shame, despair, contrition, prayer, and hope, to a perfect and complete repentance. At the end of the tenth book they are represented as prostrating themselves upon the ground, and watering the earth with their tears: To which the poet joins this beautiful circumstance, that they offered up their penitential prayers, on the very place where their Judge appeared to them when he pronounced their sentence.

There is a beauty of the same kind in a tragedy of Sophocles, where Oedipus, after having put out his own eyes, instead of breaking his neck from the palace-battlements, (which furnishes so elegant an entertainment for our English audience,) desires that he may be conducted to mount Cithæron, in order to end his life in that very place where he was exposed in



his infancy, and where he should then have died, had the will of his parents been executed.

As the author never fails to give a poetical turn to his sentiments, he describes in the beginning of the ELEVENTH BOOK the acceptance which these their prayers met with, in a short allegory, formed upon that beautiful passage in Holy Writ: “ *And another Angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, which was before the throne: And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God.*”

We have the same thought expressed a second time in the intercession of the Messiah, which is conceived in very emphatical sentiments and expressions.

Among the poetical parts of Scripture, which Milton has so finely wrought into this part of his narration, I must not omit that wherein Ezekiel, speaking of the Angels who appeared to him in a vision, adds, that “ *every one had four faces, and that their whole bodies, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings, were full of eyes round about.*”—

——— “ The cohort bright

“ Of watchful Cherubim; four faces each

“ Had, like a double Janus, all their shape

“ Spangled with eyes — ”



The assembling of all the Angels of Heaven to hear the solemn decree passed upon Man, is represented in very lively ideas. The Almighty is here described as remembering mercy in the midst of judgement, and commanding Michael to deliver his message in the mildest terms, lest the spirit of Man, which was already broken with the sense of his guilt and misery, should fail before him.

The conference of Adam and Eve is full of moving sentiments. Upon their going abroad after the melancholy night which they had passed together, they discover the lion and the eagle pursuing, each of them, their prey towards the eastern gates of Paradise. There is a double beauty in this incident, not only as it presents great and just omens, which are always agreeable in poetry, but as it expresses that enmity which was now produced in the animal creation. The poet, to show the like changes in nature, as well as to grace his fable with a noble prodigy, represents the sun in an eclipse. This particular incident has likewise a fine effect upon the imagination of the reader, in regard to what follows; for, at the same time that the sun is under an eclipse, a bright cloud descends in the western quarter of the heavens, filled with an host of Angels, and more luminous than the sun itself. The whole theatre of nature is darkened, that



this glorious machine may appear in all its lustre and magnificence.

I need not observe how properly this author, who always suits his parts to the actors whom he introduces, has employed Michael in the expulsion of our first parents from Paradise. The Archangel on this occasion neither appears in his proper shape, nor in that familiar manner with which Raphael, the sociable Spirit, entertained the father of mankind before the Fall. His person, his port, and behaviour, are suitable to a Spirit of the highest rank, and are exquisitely described.

<sup>d</sup> Eve's complaint, upon hearing that she was

<sup>d</sup> *Eve's complaint, &c.*] Mr. Thyer observes, that, to the remark of Addison upon the beauty and propriety of Eve's complaint, may be added "the fine contrast which there is betwixt that and Adam's sorrow, which was silent and thoughtful, as Eve's was loud and hasty; both consistent with the different characters of the sexes, which Milton has indeed kept up with great exactness through the whole Poem."

But this passage is also heightened by the poet's rhetorical art; and has been noticed, in this impressive point of view, by Dr. Beattie: "Pierced to the heart at the thought of leaving the garden of Eden, Eve, in all the violence of ungovernable sorrow, breaks forth into a pathethick *apostrophe* to Paradise, to the flowers she had reared, and to the nuptial bower she had adorned. Adam makes no address to the walks, the trees, or the flowers of the garden; the loss whereof did not so much afflict him; but, in his reply to the Archangel, expresses, *without a figure*, his regret for being banished from a place where he had so often been honoured with a manifestation of the Divine Presence. The use of the *apostrophe* in the one case, and the omission of it in the other, not



to be removed from the garden of Paradise, is wonderfully beautiful: The sentiments are not only proper to the subject, but have something in them particularly soft and womanish.

Adam's speech abounds with thoughts which are equally moving, but of a more masculine and elevated turn. Nothing can be conceived more sublime and poetical than the following passage in it:

- " This most afflicts me, that, departing hence,
- " As from his face I shall be hid, depriv'd
- " His blest countenance: Here I could frequent,
- " With worship, place by place where he vouchsaf'd
- " Presence Divine; and to my sons relate,
- " On this mount he appear'd; under this tree
- " Stood visible; among these pines his voice
- " I heard; here with him at this fountain talk'd:
- " So many grateful altars I would rear
- " Of grassy turf, and pile up every stone
- " Of lustre from the brook, in memory
- " Or monument to ages; and thereon
- " Offer sweet-smelling gums, and fruits, and flowers:
- " In yonder nether world where shall I seek
- " His bright appearances, or footsteps trace?
- " For though I fled him angry, yet, recall'd
- " To life prolong'd and promis'd race, I now
- " Gladly behold though but his utmost skirts
- " Of glory; and far off his steps adore."

only gives a beautiful variety to the style, but also marks the superior elevation and composure of mind, by which the poet had all along distinguished the character of Adam." *Ess. on Poetry and Mus. sect. iii.*



The Angel afterwards leads Adam to the highest mount of Paradise, and lays before him a whole hemisphere, as a proper stage for those visions which were to be represented on it. I have before observed how the plan of Milton's Poem is in many particulars greater than that of the *Iliad* or *Æneid*. Virgil's hero, in the last of these poems, is entertained with a sight of all those who are to descend from him; but, though that episode is justly admired as one of the noblest designs in the whole *Æneid*, every one must allow that this of Milton is of a much higher nature. Adam's vision is not confined to any particular tribe of mankind, but extends to the whole species.

In this great review which Adam takes of all his sons and daughters, the first objects he is presented with exhibit to him the story of Cain and Abel, which is drawn together with much closeness and propriety of expression. That curiosity and natural horror, which arise in Adam at the sight of the first dying man, are touched with great beauty :

“ But have I now seen Death ? Is this the way

“ I must return to native dust ? O sight

“ Of terrour, foul and ugly to behold,

“ Horrid to think, how horrible to feel ! ”

The second vision sets before him the image of death in a great variety of appearances.



The Angel, to give him a general idea of those effects which his guilt had brought upon his posterity, places before him a large hospital or lazaret-house, filled with persons lying under all kinds of mortal diseases. How finely has the poet told us that the sick persons languished under lingering and incurable distempers, by an apt and judicious use of such imaginary Beings as those I have before mentioned :

“ Dire was the tossing, deep the groans ; Despair  
 “ Tended the sick busiest from couch to couch ;  
 “ And over them triumphant Death his dart  
 “ Shook, but delay’d to strike, though oft invoc’d  
 “ With vows, as their chief good, and final hope.”

The passion, which likewise rises in Adam on this occasion, is very natural :

“ Sight so deform what heart of rock could long  
 “ Dry-ey’d behold ? Adam could not, but wept,  
 “ Though not of woman born ; compassion quell’d  
 “ His best of man, and gave him up to tears.”

The discourse between the Angel and Adam, which follows, abounds with noble morals.

As there is nothing more delightful in poetry, than a contrast and opposition of incidents, the author, after this melancholy prospect of death and sickness, raises up a scene of mirth, love, and jollity. The secret pleasure that steals into Adam’s heart, as he is intent upon this vision, is imagined with great delicacy. I must not



omit the description of the loose female troop, who seduced the sons of God, as they are called in Scripture :

“ For that fair female troop thou saw’st, that seem’d  
 “ Of goddeses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay,  
 “ Yet empty of all good wherein consists  
 “ Woman’s domestick honour, and chief praise ;  
 “ Bred only and completed to the taste  
 “ Of lustful appetite, to sing, to dance,  
 “ To dress, and troll the tongue, and roll the eye :  
 “ To these that sober race of men, whose lives  
 “ Religious titled them the sons of God,  
 “ Shall yield up all their virtue, all their fame,  
 “ Ignobly, to the trains and to the smiles  
 “ Of these fair atheists — ”

The next vision is of a quite contrary nature, and filled with the horrors of war. Adam, at the sight of it, melts into tears ; and breaks out into that passionate speech,

————— “ O ! what are these,  
 “ Death’s ministers, not men ? who thus deal death  
 “ Inhumanly to men, and multiply  
 “ Ten thousandfold the sin of him who slew  
 “ His brother : for of whom such massacre  
 “ Make they, but of their brethren ; men of men ? ”

Milton, to keep up an agreeable variety in his visions, after having raised in the mind of his reader the several ideas of terrour which are conformable to the description of war, passes on to those softer images of triumphs and fes-



tivals, in that vision of lewdness and luxury which ushers in the Flood.

As it is visible that the poet had his eye upon Ovid's account of the universal deluge, the reader may observe with how much judgement he has avoided every thing that is redundant or puerile in the Latin poet. We do not here see the wolf swimming among the sheep, or any of those wanton imaginations, which Seneca found fault with, as unbecoming the great catastrophe of Nature. If our poet has imitated that verse in which Ovid tells us that there was nothing but sea, and that this sea had no shore to it, he has not set the thought in such a light as to incur the censure which criticks have passed upon it. The latter part of that verse in Ovid is idle and superfluous, but just and beautiful in Milton :

“ Jamque mare et tellus nullum discrimen habebant,  
“ Nil nisi pontus erat, deerant quoque littora ponto.”

———— “ Sea cover'd sea,  
“ Sea without shore —”

In Milton the former part of the description does not forestal the latter. How much more great and solemn on this occasion is that which follows in our English poet ;

———— “ And in their palaces,  
“ Where luxury late reign'd, sea-monsters whelp'd  
“ And stabled —”



than that in Ovid, where we are told that the sea-calves lay in those places where the goats were used to browse ! The reader may find several other parallel passages in the Latin and English description of the deluge, wherein our poet has visibly the advantage. The sky's being overcharged with clouds, the descending of the rains, the rising of the seas, and the appearance of the rainbow, are such descriptions as every one must take notice of. The circumstance relating to Paradise is finely imagined, and suitable to the opinions of many learned authors :

————— “ Then shall this mount  
 “ Of Paradise by might of waves be mov'd  
 “ Out of his place, push'd by the horned flood,  
 “ With all his verdure spoil'd, and trees adrift  
 “ Down the great river to the opening gulf,  
 “ And there take root an island salt and bare,  
 “ The haunt of seals, and orcs, and sea-mews' clang.”

The transition which the poet makes, from the vision of the deluge, to the concern it occasioned in Adam, is exquisitely graceful, and copied after Virgil, though the first thought it introduces is rather in the spirit of Ovid :

“ How didst thou grieve then, Adam, to behold  
 “ The end of all thy offspring, end so sad,  
 “ Depopulation ! Thee another flood,  
 “ Of tears and sorrow a flood, thee also drown'd,  
 “ And sunk thee as thy sons ; till, gently rear'd  
 “ By the Angel, on thy feet thou stood'st at last,



“ Though comfortless ; as when a father mourns

“ His children, all in view destroy'd at once.”

I have been the more particular in my quotations out of the eleventh book of *Paradise Lost*, because it is not generally reckoned among the most shining books of this Poem ; for which reason the reader might be apt to overlook those many passages in it which deserve our admiration. The eleventh and twelfth are indeed built upon that single circumstance of the removal of our first parents from Paradise ; but, though this is not in itself so great a subject as that in most of the foregoing books, it is extended and diversified with so many surprising incidents and pleasing episodes, that \* these two last books can by no means be looked upon as unequal parts of this divine Poem. I must further add, that, had not Milton represented our first parents as driven out of Paradise, his Fall of Man would not have been complete, and consequently his action would have been imperfect.—

Milton, after having represented in vision the history of mankind to the first great period of nature, despatches the remaining part of it in narration. He has devised a very handsome reason for the Angel's proceeding with Adam after this manner ; though, doubtless, the true reason was

\* *these two last books &c.*] The close of the Poem is further defended in the next Note.



the difficulty which the poet would have found to have shadowed out so mixed and complicated a story in visible objects. I could wish, however, that the author had done it, whatever pains it might have cost him. To give my opinion freely, I think that the exhibiting part of the history of mankind in vision, and part in narrative, is as if an history-painter should put in colours one half of his subject, and write down the remaining part of it. <sup>f</sup> If Milton's Poem

<sup>f</sup> *If Milton's Poem flags any where, it is in this narration;]* "If we have an eye only to poetick decoration," says Mr. Thyer, "the remark is just: but if we view it in another light, and consider in how short a compass he has comprised, and with what strength and clearness he has expressed, the various actings of God towards mankind, and the most sublime and deep truths both of the Jewish and Christian theology; it must excite no less admiration in the mind of an attentive reader, than the more sprightly scenes of love and innocence in Eden, or the more turbulent ones of angelick war in Heaven. This contrivance of Milton's to introduce into his Poem so many things posterior to the time of action fixed in his first plan, by a visionary prophetick relation of them, is, it must be allowed, common, with our author, to Virgil and most epick poets since his time; but there is one thing to be observed singular in our English poet, which is, that whereas they have all done it principally, if not wholly, to have an opportunity of complimenting their own country and friends, he has not the least mention of, or friendly allusion to, his."

With deference to preceding opinions, it seems to me, however, that Milton has not entirely omitted to bestow poetical decoration on the conclusion of his divine Poem; that the twelfth book can boast a variety of elegant numbers, and a most judicious selection of words. The exhibiting part of the history of mankind in vision, and part in narrative, is not perhaps exactly subject to the censure of Mr. Addison. It should be remembered,



flags any where, it is in this narration ; where in some places the author has been so attentive to his divinity, that he has neglected his poetry. The narration, however, rises very happily on several occasions, where the subject is capable of poetical ornaments, as particularly in the confusion which he describes among the builders of Babel, and in his short sketch of the plagues of Egypt. The storm of hail and fire, and the darkness that overspread the land for three days, are described with great strength. The beautiful passage, which follows, is raised upon noble hints in Scripture :

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“ Thus with ten wounds  
 “ The river-dragon tam'd at length submits  
 “ To let his sojourners depart ; and oft  
 “ Humbles his stubborn heart ; but still, as ice  
 “ More harden'd after thaw : till, in his rage  
 “ Pursuing whom he late dismiss'd, the sea  
 “ Swallows him with his host ; but them lets pass  
 “ As on dry land between two crystal walls ;  
 “ Aw'd by the rod of Moses so to stand  
 “ Divided —”

not only that the Angel artfully assigns the reason for discontinuing the vision, and introducing the narration :

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“ I perceive  
 “ Thy mortal fight to fail ; objects divine  
 “ Must needs impair and weary human sense —”

but also that many circumstances in the narration, which succeeds, were not capable of being represented to the sight. And thus the reader may admire the judgement with which Milton planned, as well as the perspicuity with which he has arranged, the concluding parts of *Paradise Lost*.



The river-dragon is an allusion to the crocodile, which inhabits the Nile, from whence Egypt derives her plenty. This allusion is taken from that sublime passage in Ezekiel; “*Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I am against thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said, My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself.*” Milton has given us another very noble and poetical image in the same description, which is copied almost word for word out of the history of Moses:

“ All night he will pursue, but his approach

“ Darkness defends between till morning watch; &c.”

As the principal design of this episode was to give Adam an idea of the Holy Person who was to reinstate human nature in that happiness and perfection from which it had fallen, the poet confines himself to the line of Abraham, from whence the Messiah was to descend. The Angel is described as seeing the patriarch actually travelling towards the Land of Promise, which gives a particular liveliness to this part of the narration.

“ I see him, but thou canst not, with what faith

“ He leaves his Gods, his friends, his native soil,

“ Ur of Chaldea, passing now the ford

“ To Haran; after him a cumbrous train

“ Of herds, and flocks, and numerous servitude;

“ Not wandering poor, but trusting all his wealth

“ With God, who call'd him, in a land unknown,

“ Canaan he now attains; I see his tents



- " Pitch'd about Sechem, and the neighbouring plain  
 " Of Moreh ; there by promise he receives  
 " Gift to his progeny of all that land,  
 " From Hamath northward to the Defart south ;  
 " (Things by their names I call, though yet unnam'd.)"

As Virgil's vision in the sixth *Æneid* probably gave Milton the hint of this whole episode, the last line is a translation of that verse where Anchises mentions the names of places, which they were to bear hereafter.

*" Hæc tum nomina erunt, nunc sunt sine nomine terræ."*

The poet has very finely represented the joy and gladness of heart which rises in Adam upon his discovery of the Messiah. As he sees his day at a distance through types and shadows, he rejoices in it ; but when he finds the redemption of man completed, and Paradise again renewed, he breaks forth in rapture and transport ;

- " O Goodness infinite, Goodness immense !  
 " That all this good of evil shall produce, &c."

I have before hinted, that an heroick poem, according to the opinion of the best criticks, ought to end happily, and leave the mind of the reader, after having conducted it through many doubts and fears, sorrows and disquietudes, in a state of tranquillity and satisfaction. Milton's fable, which had so many other qualifications to recommend it, was deficient in this particular. It is here, therefore, that the poet has shown a



most exquisite judgement, as well as the finest invention, by finding out a method to supply this natural defect in his subject. Accordingly he leaves the Adversary of mankind, in the last view which he gives of him, under the lowest state of mortification and disappointment. We see him chewing ashes, groveling in the dust, and loaden with supernumerary pains and torments. On the contrary, our two first parents are comforted by dreams and visions, cheered with promises of salvation, and, in a manner, raised to a greater happiness, than that which they had forfeited: In short, Satan is represented miserable in the height of his triumphs, and Adam triumphant in the height of misery.

Milton's Poem ends very nobly. The last speeches of Adam and the Archangel are full of moral and instructive sentiments. The sleep that fell upon Eve, and the effects it had in quieting the disorders of her mind, produce the same kind of consolation in the reader; who cannot peruse the last beautiful speech, which is ascribed to the mother of mankind, without a secret pleasure and satisfaction.

The following lines, which conclude the Poem, rise in a most glorious blaze of poetical images and expressions.

Heliodorus in his *Æthiopicks* acquaints us, that the motion of the gods differs from that of mortals; as the former do not stir their feet, or



proceed step by step, but slide over the surface of the earth by an uniform swimming of the whole body. The reader may observe with how poetical a description Milton has attributed the same kind of motion to the Angels who were to take possession of Paradise :

“ So spake our mother Eve ; and Adam heard  
 “ Well pleas’d, but answer’d not ; for now too nigh  
 “ The Archangel stood ; and, from the other hill  
 “ To their fix’d station, all in bright array  
 “ The Cherubim descended ; on the ground  
 “ Gliding meteorous, as evening-mist  
 “ Ris’n from a river o’er the marsh glides,  
 “ And gathers ground fast at the labourer’s heel  
 “ Homeward returning. High in front advanc’d,  
 “ The brandish’d sword of God before them blaz’d,  
 “ Fierce as a comet —”

The author helped his invention in the following passage, by reflecting on the behaviour of the Angel, who, in Holy Writ, has the conduct of Lot and his family. The circumstances drawn from that relation are very gracefully made use of on this occasion :

“ In either hand the hastening Angel caught  
 “ Our lingering parents, and to the eastern gate  
 “ Led them direct ; and down the cliff as fast  
 “ To the subjected plain ; then disappear’d :  
 “ They, looking back, &c.”

The scene which our first parents are surpris’d with, upon their looking back on Paradise, wonderfully strikes the reader’s imagination ; as no-



thing can be more natural than the tears they shed on that occasion :

“ They, looking back, all the eastern side beheld  
 “ Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,  
 “ Wav’d over by that flaming brand ; the gate  
 “ With dreadful faces throng’d, and fiery arms :  
 “ Some natural tears they dropt, but wip’d them soon ;  
 “ The world was all before them, where to choose  
 “ Their place of rest, and Providence their guide.”

If I might presume to offer at the smallest alteration in this divine work, <sup>g</sup> I should think the Poem would end better with the passage here quoted, than with the two verses which follow :

“ They, hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow,  
 “ Through Eden took their solitary way.”

These two verses, though they have their beauty, fall very much below the foregoing passage, and renew in the mind of the reader that anguish which was pretty well laid by that consideration ;

“ The world was all before them where to choose  
 “ Their place of rest, and Providence their guide.”

The number of books in *Paradise Lost* is equal to those of the *Æneid*. Our author in his first edition had divided his Poem into ten books, but afterwards broke the seventh, and the eleventh, each of them into two different books, by the

<sup>g</sup> *I should think the Poem would end better &c.*] The criticks are divided on this point. See the Notes on B. xii. 648.



help of some small additions. This second division was made with great judgement, as any one may see who will be at the pains of examining it. It was not done for the sake of such a chimerical beauty as that of resembling Virgil in this particular, but for the more just and regular disposition of this great work.

Those who have read Boffu, and many of the criticks who have written since his time, will not pardon me if I do not find out the particular moral which is inculcated in *Paradise Lost*. Though I can by no means think with the last mentioned French author, that an epick writer first of all pitches upon a certain moral, as the groundwork and foundation of his poem, and afterwards finds out a story to it: I am, however, of opinion, that no just heroick poem ever was or can be made, from whence one great moral may not be deduced. That, which reigns in Milton, is the most universal and most useful that can be imagined: It is in short this, *That obedience to the Will of God makes men happy, and that disobedience makes them miserable*. This is visibly the moral of the principal fable, which turns upon Adam and Eve, who continued in Paradise, while they kept the command that was given them, and were driven out of it as soon as they had transgressed. This is likewise the moral of the principal episode, which shows us how an innumerable multitude of Angels fell from their



state of blifs, and were caſt into Hell upon their diſobedience. Beſides this great moral, which may be looked upon as the ſoul of the fable, there are an infinity of under morals which are to be drawn from the ſeveral parts of the Poem; and which makes this work more uſeful, and inſtructive, than any other poem in any language.

Thoſe who have criticifed on the *Odyſſey*, the *Iliad*, and *Æneid*, have taken a great deal of pains to fix the number of months and days contained in the action of each of thoſe poems. If any one thinks it worth his while to examine this particular in Milton, <sup>h</sup> he will find that, from Adam's firſt appearance in the fourth book, to his expulſion from Paradife in the twelfth, the author reckons ten days. As for that part of the action which is deſcribed in the three firſt books, as it does not paſs within the regions of nature, I have before obſerved that it is not ſubject to any calculations of time.

I have now finiſhed my obſervations on a work, which does an honour to the Engliſh nation. I have taken a general view of it under theſe four heads, <sup>i</sup> the FABLE, the CHARACTERS, the SEN-

<sup>h</sup> *he will find &c.*] See a minute account of the action, before, in the Note, p. 32.

<sup>i</sup> *the fable, the characters, the ſentiments, and the LANGUAGE.*] There is yet a beauty in Milton's LANGUAGE, of which little notice has been taken by Mr. Addiſon; and of which (although theſe ornaments are more frequent in his earlier poems) there are



TIMENTS, and the LANGUAGE. I have, in the next place, spoken of the censures which our author may incur under each of these heads ; of which I might have enlarged the number, if I

many examples in the *Paradise Lost* : I mean his compound epithets ; such as “ *sky-tinctur'd grain*,”—“ *sable-vested Night*,”—“ *heaven-warning champions*,”—“ *night-warbling bird*,”—“ *love-labour'd song*, &c.” See many more in Peck's *Memoirs of Milton*, 1740, pp. 117, &c. Mr. Addison cites only “ *hell-doom'd*.” See before, p. 55.

It may not be improper to add a few remarks respecting these combinations of words. They abound in our elder poetry, and are often remarkably significant and happy. Spenser and Shakespeare afford many beautiful instances. In Sylvester's *Du Bartas*, there is scarcely a page in which a compound epithet may not be found. Dr. Warton has censured this immoderate use of them in Sylvester. Yet there are many epithets of great merit in this voluminous author ; and with which Milton appears to have been pleased ; such as “ *love-darting eyn*,”—“ *flowery-mantled earth*,”—“ *smooth-sliding floods*, &c.” Browne, in his *Britannia's Pastorals*, elegantly calls the Morning “ *lilly-handed* :” Other decorations of this kind may be found in his poems. Drayton seems to have been particularly fond of compounds ; for, in his fifty-third Sonnet alone, there occur the “ *silver-sanded shore*,”—the “ *nectar-dropping showers*,”—the “ *myrrhe-breathing zephyr*,” and the “ *dew-impearled flowers*.” From Hall's *Satires*, from the poetry of Daniel, Drummond, Wither, and Crashaw, many compounds of fine effect might be extracted. Compound epithets indeed were so much in fashion, in the beginning of the seventeenth century, that they were often admitted into prose. Thus in Stafford's *Niobe, or His Age of Teares*, 1611, p. 9, speaking of immodest women, “ *whatsoever their lust-darting eyes shall seize vpon* :” Again, speaking of a lady's mouth, “ *those lippes, the purple porters to that corall-paved palace*,” p. 122 ; an epithet, which Milton has differently applied in *Comus*, v. 886. Many more instances might be given.



had been disposed to dwell on so ungrateful a subject. I believe, however, that the severest reader will not find any little fault in heroick poetry, which this author has fallen into, that does not come under one of those heads among which I have distributed his several blemishes.

After having thus treated at large of *Paradise Lost*, I could not think it sufficient to have celebrated this Poem in the whole, without descending to particulars. I have, therefore, endeavoured not only to prove that the Poem is beautiful in general, but to point out its particular beauties, and to determine wherein they consist. I have endeavoured to show how some passages are beautiful by being sublime, others by being soft, others by being natural; which of them are recommended by the passion, which by the moral, which by the sentiment, and which by the expression. I have likewise endeavoured to show how the genius of the poet shines by a happy invention, a distant allusion, or a judicious imitation; how he has copied or improved Homer or Virgil, and raises his own imaginations by the use which he has made of several poetical passages in Scripture. I might have inserted also several passages of Tasso, which our author has imitated; but, as I do not look upon Tasso to be a sufficient voucher, I would not perplex my reader with such quotations, as might do



more honour to the Italian than the English poet. In short, I have endeavoured to particularize those innumerable kinds of beauty, which it would be tedious to recapitulate, but which are essential to poetry ; and which may be met with in the works of this great author \*. ADDISON.

\* The preceding criticism may be found in the following eighteen Papers, in *The Spectator*, viz. N<sup>os</sup>. 267, 273, 279, 285, 291, 297, 303, 309, 315, 321, 327, 333, 339, 345, 351, 357, 363, and 369. I have here formed them into a Preliminary Discourse ; to which I add, from the 86th, 88th, 90th, 92d, and 94th Papers in *The Rambler*, (which seem to have been intended by Dr. Johnson as a Supplement to Mr. Addison's illustration of the FABLE, the CHARACTERS, the SENTIMENTS, and the LANGUAGE,) a criticism on the VERSIFICATION. See p. 197.

I venture to remark, that two passages of uncommon beauty and excellence have escaped the notice of Mr. Addison : I mean the speech of Satan in the ninth book, ver. 99, &c. which exhibits perhaps the finest traits of character in the whole Poem ; and the description of the same Infernal Being, in the tenth book, after Eve has been seduced, changing his shape to observe the sequel ; flying when he beholds the Son of God descend to judge our first parents ; returning afterwards, and listening to their sad discourse ; and thence gathering his own doom.



DR. JOHNSON'S REMARKS  
ON THE  
VERSIFICATION OF MILTON.

*" Legitimúmque sonum digitis callemus et aure."*

Hor. *Art. Poet.* v. 274.

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*" The secret power<sup>a</sup>  
Of harmony, in tones and numbers hit  
By voice or hand; and various-measur'd verse."*

Par. Reg. B. iv. 255.

ONE of the ancients has observed, that the burthen of government is encreased upon princes by the virtues of their immediate predeceffours. It is, indeed, always dangerous to be placed in a state of unavoidable comparifon with excellence; and the danger is ftill greater when that excellence is confecrated by death, when envy and intereft

<sup>a</sup> Dr. Warton is juftly furprifed, that Pope fhould notice two great mafters of VERSIFICATION, Waller and Dryden, and yet omit the name of Milton. "What! did Milton contribute nothing to the harmony and extent of our language?—Surely his verfes vary, and refound as much, and difplay as much majesty and energy, as any that can be found in Dryden." See *Effay on Pope*, vol. ii. p. 351, edit. 1782.

I fhall enlarge thefe remarks of Dr. Johnfon by occasionally introducing other opinions refpecting MILTON'S VERSIFICATION; together with various proofs, that the poet's "skill in harmony was not lefs than his invention or his learning."



cease to act against it, and those passions by which it was at first vilified and opposed now stand in its defence, and turn their vehemence against honest emulation.

He, that succeeds a celebrated writer, has the same difficulties to encounter: He stands under the shade of exalted merit, and is hindered from rising to his natural height, by the interception of those beams which should invigorate and quicken him. He applies to that attention which is already engaged, and unwilling to be drawn off from certain satisfaction; or perhaps to an attention already wearied, and not to be recalled to the same object. One of the old poets congratulates himself that he has the untrodden regions of Parnassus before him, and that his garland will be gathered from plantations which no writer had yet culled. But the imitator treads a beaten walk; and, with all his diligence, can only hope to find a few flowers or branches untouched by his predecessor; the refuse of contempt, or the omissions of negligence. The Macedonian conqueror, when he was once invited to hear a man that sung like a nightingale, replied with contempt, that *he had heard the nightingale herself*; and the same treatment must every man expect, whose praise is, that he imitates another.

Yet, in the midst of these discouraging reflections, I am about to offer to the reader some ob-



servations upon *Paradise Lost*; and hope, that, however I may fall below the illustrious writer who has so long dictated to the commonwealth of learning, my attempt may not be wholly useless. There are, in every age, new errors to be rectified, and new prejudices to be opposed. False taste is always busy to mislead those that are entering upon the regions of learning; and the traveller, uncertain of his way, and forsaken by the sun, will be pleased to see a fainter orb arise on the horizon, that may rescue him from total darkness, though with weak and borrowed lustre.

Addison, though he has considered this Poem under most of the general topicks of criticism, has barely touched upon the VERSIFICATION; not probably because he thought the art of numbers unworthy of his notice, for he knew with how minute attention the ancient criticks considered the disposition of syllables, and had himself given hopes of some metrical observations upon the great Roman poet; but being the first who undertook to display the beauties, and point out the defects, of Milton, he had many objects at once before him, and passed willingly over those which were most barren of ideas, and required labour rather than genius.

Yet versification, or the art of modulating his numbers, is indispensably necessary to a poet.



Every other power by which the understanding is enlightened, or the imagination enchanted, may be exercised in prose. But the poet has this peculiar superiority, that, to all the powers which the perfection of every other composition can require, he adds the faculty of joining music with reason, and of acting at once upon the senses and the passions. I suppose there are few who do not feel themselves touched by poetical melody, and who will not confess that they are more or less moved by the same thoughts, as they are conveyed by different sounds ; and more affected by the same words in one order, than in another. The perception of harmony is indeed conferred upon men in degrees very unequal ; but there are none who do not perceive it, or to whom a regular series of proportionate sounds cannot give delight.

In treating ON THE VERSIFICATION OF MILTON, I am desirous to be generally understood, and shall therefore studiously decline the dialect of grammarians ; though, indeed, it is always difficult, and sometimes scarcely possible, to deliver the precepts of an art without the terms by which the peculiar ideas of that art are expressed, and which had not been invented but because the language, already in use, was insufficient. If therefore I shall sometimes seem obscure, may it be imputed to this voluntary interdiction, and to



a desire of avoiding that offence which is always given by unusual words.

The heroick measure of the English language may be properly considered as pure or mixed. It is pure, when the accent rests upon every second syllable through the whole line :

“ Courage uncertain dangers may abate,

“ But who can bear th' approach of certain fate.”

*Dryden.*

“ Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights

“ His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,

“ Reigns here and revels ; not in the bought smile

“ Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendear'd.”

*Milton.*

The accent may be observed, in the second line of Dryden, and in the second and fourth of Milton, to repose upon every second syllable.

The repetition of this sound or percussive at equal times, is the most complete harmony of which a single verse is capable, and should therefore be exactly kept in distichs, and generally in the last line of a paragraph, that the ear may rest without any sense of imperfection.

But, to preserve the series of sounds untransposed in a long composition, is not only very difficult, but tiresome and disgusting ; for we are soon wearied with the perpetual recurrence of the same cadence. Necessity has therefore enforced the mixed measure, in which some variation of the accents is allowed : This, though it



always injures the harmony of the line considered by itself, yet compensates the loss by relieving us from the continual tyranny of the same sound; and makes us more sensible of the harmony of the pure measure.

Of these mixed numbers every poet affords us innumerable instances; and Milton seldom has two pure lines together, as will appear if any of his paragraphs be read with attention merely to the music:

“ Thus, at their shady lodge arriv’d, both stood,  
 “ Both turn’d, and under open sky ador’d  
 “ The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heaven,  
 “ Which they beheld, the moon’s resplendent globe,  
 “ *And starry pole: Thou also mad’st the night,*  
 “ Maker Omnipotent, and thou the day,  
 “ Which we, in our appointed work employ’d,  
 “ Have finish’d, happy in our mutual help  
 “ *And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss*  
 “ Ordain’d by thee; and this delicious place  
 “ For us too large, where thy abundance wants  
 “ Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.  
 “ But thou hast promis’d from us two a race  
 “ To fill the earth, who shall with us extol  
 “ Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,  
 “ And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.”

In this passage it will be at first observed, that all the lines are not equally harmonious; and upon a nearer examination it will be found that only the fifth and ninth lines are regular, and the rest are more or less licentious with respect to the



accent. In some the accent is equally upon two syllables together, and in both strong. As

“ Thus, at their shady lodge arriv’d, *both stood,*  
 “ *Both turn’d,* and under open sky ador’d  
 “ The God that made both sky, *air, earth,* and  
 “ *heaven.*”

In others the accent is equally upon two syllables, but upon both weak :

————— “ a race  
 “ To fill the earth, who shall with us extol  
 “ Thy goodness *infinite*, both when we wake,  
 “ *And when* we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.”

In the first pair of syllables the accent may deviate from the rigour of exactness, without any unpleasing diminution of harmony, as may be observed in the lines already cited, and more remarkably in this ;

————— “ Thou also mad’st the night,  
 “ *Maker* Omnipotent, and thou the day.”

But, excepting in the first pair of syllables, which may be considered as arbitrary, a poet, who, not having the invention or knowledge of Milton, has more need to allure his audience by musical cadences, should seldom suffer more than one aberration from the rule in any single verse.

There are two lines in this passage more remarkably unharmonious :



“ this delicious place  
 “ For us too large, *where thy* abundance wants  
 “ <sup>b</sup> Partakers, and uncropt *falls to* the ground.”

Here the third pair of syllables in the first, and fourth pair in the second, verse, have their accents retrograde or inverted; the first syllable being strong or acute, and the second weak. The detriment, which the measure suffers by this inversion of the accents, is sometimes less perceptible, when the verses are carried one into another, but is remarkably striking in this place, where

<sup>b</sup> *Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.*] But these lines exhibit *choriambicks* in the third and fourth, and in the fourth and fifth places:

“ For us too large, *where thy* abundance wants  
 “ Partakers, and uncropt *falls to* the ground.”

So, in *Par. Reg.* B. iv. 412. in the fourth and fifth places:

“ Fierce rain with lightning mix'd, *wat'ër with* firè.”

Milton is fond of introducing the *choriambick* into his verses. Thus in *Comus*, in the first and second places:

“ *Why arè* yòu *vēx'd* Lady? why do you frown?”

Again, in *Par. Reg.* B. ii. 180.

“ *Cāst wāntōn* eyes on the daughters of men.”

Again, B. iv. 289.

“ *Light frōm ābovè*, from the fountain of light.”

In the second and third places, in *Par. Lost*, B. viii. 299.

“ To the *gārdēn of blīss*, thy seat prepar'd.”

See also B. v. 750, B. xi. 79, *Par. Reg.* B. iv. 597, and *Sams. Agon.* v. 1533. And, lastly, in the third and fourth places, as well as in the first and second, in *Lycidas*:

“ Where were ye, Nymphs, *whēn thē rēmōrseless* deep.”



the vicious verse concludes a period ; and is yet more offensive in rhyme, when we regularly attend to the flow of every single line. This will appear by reading a couplet, in which Cowley, an author not sufficiently studious of harmony, has committed the same fault :

---

“ His harmless life  
 “ Does with substantial blessedness abound,  
 “ And the soft wings of peace *cover* him round.”

In these the law of metre is very grossly violated by mingling combinations of sound directly opposite to each other, as Milton expresses it in his Sonnet to Henry Lawes, by *committing short and long*, and setting one part of the measure at variance with the rest. The ancients, who had a language more capable of variety than ours, had two kinds of verse ; the Iambick, consisting of short and long syllables alternately, from which our heroick measure is derived ; and the Trochaick, consisting in a like alternation of long and short. These were considered as opposites, and conveyed the contrary images of speed and slowness ; to confound them, therefore, as in these lines, is to deviate from the established practice. But, where the senses are to judge, authority is not necessary ; the ear is sufficient to detect dissonance ; nor should I have sought auxiliaries, on such an occasion, against any name but that of Milton.—

“ There is no reputation for genius,” says Quintilian, “ to be gained by writing on things,



which, however necessary, have little splendour or show. The height of a building attracts the eye, but the foundations lie without regard. Yet, since there is not any way to the top of science but from the lowest parts, I shall think nothing unconnected with the art of oratory, which he that wants cannot be an orator."

Confirmed and animated by this illustrious precedent, I shall continue my inquiries into Milton's art of versification. Since, however minute the employment may appear of analysing lines into syllables, and whatever ridicule may be incurred by a solemn deliberation upon accents and pauses, it is certain that without this petty knowledge no man can be a poet; and that from the proper disposition of single sounds results that harmony which adds force to reason, and gives grace to sublimity; which shackles attention, and governs passion.

That verse may be melodious and pleasing, it is necessary, not only that the words be so ranged  
 "as that the accent may fall on its proper place,

"as that the accent may fall on its proper place,] Mr. Tyrwhitt says, "It is agreed, I believe, that, in our heroick metre, those verses, considered singly, are the most harmonious, in which the accents fall upon the even syllables; but it has never, that I know, been defined, how far a verse may vary from this its most perfect form, and yet remain a verse. On the *tenth* (or rhyming) syllable a strong accent is in all cases indispensably required; and, in order to make the line tolerably harmonious, it seems necessary that at least *two more* of the *even* syllables should be accented, the



but that the syllables themselves be so chosen as to flow smoothly into one another. This is to be effected by a proportionate mixture of vowels and consonants, and by tempering the mute consonants with liquids and semivowels. The Hebrew grammarians have observed, that it is impossible to pronounce two consonants without the intervention of a vowel, or without some emission of the breath between one and the other; this is longer and more perceptible, as the sounds of the consonants are less harmonically conjoined; and, by consequence, the flow of the verse is longer interrupted.

It is pronounced by Dryden, that a line of monosyllables is almost always harsh. This, with regard to our language, <sup>d</sup> is evidently true, not

*fourth* being (almost always) one of them. Milton, however, has not subjected his verse even to these rules; and particularly, either by negligence or design, he has frequently put an *unaccented* syllable in the *fourth* place. See *Par. Lost*, B. iii. 36, 586, B. v. 413, 750, 874." *Essay on the Lang. and Versif. of Chaucer*, p. 62.

The second passage, to which Mr. Tyrwhitt refers, is considered by another critick as a verse of admirable effect; the rapidity of the *dactyl* in the *second* place, where it is unusual, having great force, especially when joined, as in this instance, with other quick feet, the *trochee* or *pyrrhick*:

"Shōts in|visīble| virtue even to the deep."

Again, B. ii. 880.

"With īm|pētūōūs| recoil, and jarring sound."

See Foster's *Ess. on Accent*, 2d. edit. p. 58.

<sup>d</sup> is evidently true,] With submission to Dr. Johnson's opinion, I think I may produce, from Milton's poetry, lines consisting of



because monosyllables cannot compose harmony, but because our monosyllables being of Teutonick original, or formed by contraction, commonly begin and end with consonants, as,

————— “ every lower faculty  
 “ *Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch,*  
 “ *taste.*”

The difference of harmony, arising principally from the collocation of vowels and consonants, will be sufficiently conceived by attending to the following passages :

“ Immortal amarant — there grows,  
 “ And flowers aloft shading the fount of life,  
 “ And where the river of bliss through midst of Heaven  
 “ *Rolls o'er Elysian flowers her amber stream ;*  
 “ With these that never fade the Spirits elect  
 “ *Bind their resplendent locks in wreath'd with beams.*”

The same comparison, that I propose to be monosyllables, which are by no means harsh ; but, on the contrary, most musically expressive : As in *Comus*, v. 87, of *Thyrsis* :

“ Who with his soft pipe, and smooth-dittied song,  
 “ *Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar.*”

And in *Par. Lost*, B. v. 193.

“ His praise, ye Winds, that from four quarters blow,  
 “ *Breathe soft or loud ; and, wave your tops, ye Pines.*”

Many instances indeed might be added. I must not omit that truly sublime description at the beginning of the address just cited :

“ On Earth join all ye Creatures to extol  
 “ *Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.*”



made between the fourth and sixth verses of this passage, may be repeated between the last lines of the following quotations :

“ ————— “ Underfoot the violet,  
 “ Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay  
 “ *Broider'd the ground, more colour'd than with stone*  
 “ Of costliest emblem.”—

————— “ Here, in close recess,  
 “ With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,  
 “ Espoused Eve deck'd first her nuptial bed ;  
 “ *And heavenly quires the hymenæan sung.*”

Milton, whose ear had been accustomed not only to the musick of the ancient tongues, which, however vitiated by our pronunciation, excell all that are now in use ; but to the softness of the Italian, the most mellifluous of all modern poetry ; seems fully convinced of the unsuitness of our language for smooth versification, and is therefore pleased with an opportunity of calling in a softer word to his assistance ; for this reason, and \* I believe for this only, he sometimes indulges himself in a long series of proper names, and introduces them where they add little but musick to his Poem :

\* *and I believe for this only,*] Yet the second passage, which Dr. Johnson here cites, seems to have been introduced by Milton rather as a compliment to Galileo ; as an affectionate remembrance also of those delightful scenes in Italy which he had formerly visited,



————— “ The richer feat  
 “ Of *Atabalipa* ; and yet unspoil'd  
 “ *Guiana*, whose great city *Geryon's* sons  
 “ Call *El Dorado*.” —

————— “ The moon, whose orb  
 “ Through optick glafs the *Tuscan* artist views  
 “ At evening from the top of *Fesolé*,  
 “ Or in *Valdarno*, to descry new lands.”

He has, indeed, been <sup>f</sup> more attentive to his syllables than to his accents, and does not often offend by collisions of consonants, or openings of vowels upon each other ; at least, not more often than other writers who have had less important or complicated subjects to take off their care from the cadence of their lines.

<sup>g</sup> The great peculiarity of Milton's versifica-

<sup>f</sup> *more attentive to his syllables than to his accents,*] It should be remembered, however, that the accentuation of words was very unsettled in Milton's time. Many words, as *obscure*, *supreme*, *complete*, *oblique*, *congeal'd*, &c. were accented on either syllable, to suit the poet's purpose. Even *odorous*, with the accent on the second syllable, may be found in other poetry ; although it has been said to exist only in that of Milton. See the Note on *Par. Lost*, B. v. 482. The Latin accent seems to have been intended also by Milton in *infinite*, *Ibid*, B. v. 874.

“ Through the *infinite* host —”  
*Future*, *prostrate*, &c. are also thus accented, in some places by Milton, like the Latin words from which they are derived. And he is countenanced by Spenser and Fairfax.

<sup>g</sup> *The great peculiarity &c.*] I must add to Dr. Johnson's remark, that in our ancient poetry verses frequently occur, in which dissyllabick words stand in the places of monosyllables, even where a consonant intervenes ; as *anger*, *iron*, *evil*, *garden*, *spirit*,



tion, compared with that of later poets, is the elision of one vowel before another, or the suppression of the last syllable of a word ending with a vowel, when a vowel begins the following word. As

——— “ Knowledge —

“ Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns

“ Wisdom to *folly*, as nourishment to wind.”

This licence, though now disused in English poetry, was practised by our old writers, and is allowed in many other languages ancient and

&c. as well as *ruin, trial, riot, &c.* in which the two vowels are melted together. Thus perhaps (unless we may suppose that Milton intended the “verse to labour” more strongly by the admission of an *hyperrhythmical syllable*,) the dissyllable *hugest* should be pronounced as a monosyllable, *Par. Lost*, B. i. 202.

Examples of similar licence occur in *Paradise Lost*, as *highest*, B. i. 667, B. iv. 51. Milton long before assumed the liberty, so much practised by the Italian poets, of suppressing the last syllable of a word ending with a vowel; as in his eighth *Sonnet*:

“ The house of Pindarus, when *temple*’ and tower —”

And thus Drummond, in one of his *Sonnets* also:

“ To spread the azure canopy of heaven,

“ And *spangle*’ it all with sparks of burning gold.”

Many instances of words of three syllables in the places of dissyllables may likewise be found in *Paradise Lost*; which must be pronounced, like dactyls, distinct, but short. Thus indeed in his earliest poetry, *Hymn on the Nativity*, st. ii.

“ To hide her guilty front with *innocent* snow :”

As in *Macbeth*, A. ii. S. ii.

“ Macbeth does murder sleep, the *innocent* sleep.”

Compare also *Comus*, v. 574, 762, 831. And *Samson Agonistes*, v. 627. Where see the Note.



modern ; and therefore the criticks on *Paradise Lost* have, without much deliberation, commended Milton for continuing it. But one language cannot communicate its rules to another. We have already tried and rejected the hexameter of the ancients, the double close of the Italians, and the alexandrine of the French ; and the elision of vowels, however graceful it may seem to other nations, may be very unsuitable to the genius of the English Tongue.

There is reason to believe that we have negligently lost part of our vowels, and that the silent *e*, which our ancestors added to most of our monosyllables, was once vocal. By this detraction of our syllables, our language is overstocked with consonants ; and it is more necessary to add vowels to the beginning of words, than to cut them off from the end.

Milton therefore seems to have somewhat mistaken the nature of our language, of which the chief defect is ruggedness and asperity ; and has left our harsh cadences yet harsher. But his elisions are not all equally to be censured : In some syllables they may be allowed, and perhaps in a few be safely imitated. The abscision of a vowel is undoubtedly vicious when it is strongly founded, and makes, with its associate consonant, a full and audible syllable :

---

“ What he gives —  
 “ Spiritual, may to purest Spirits be found



“ *No* ingrateful food: And food alike those pure

“ *Intelligential* substances require.”—

————— “ *Hesperian* fables true,

“ If true, here *only*, and of delicious taste.”—

————— “ Evening now approach’d,

“ For we have *also* our evening and our morn.”—

————— “ Of guests he makes them slaves

“ *Inhospitably*, and kills their infant males.”

“ And vital *virtue* infus’d, and vital warmth

“ Throughout the fluid mass.”

“ God made *thee* of choice his own, and of his own

“ To serve him.”—

I believe every reader will agree that in all those passages, though not equally in all, the musick is injured, and in some the meaning obscured. There are other lines in which the vowel is cut off, but it is so faintly pronounced in common speech, that the loss of it in poetry is scarcely perceived; and therefore such compliance with the measure may be allowed:

————— “ Nature breeds,

“ Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,

“ *Abominable*, *inutterable*, and worse

“ Than fables yet have feign’d” —

————— “ From the shore

“ They view’d the vast *immeasurable* abyss.”

“ *Impenetrable*, *impal’d* with circling fire.”

“ To none *communicable* in Earth or Heaven.”

Yet even these contractions encrease the roughness of a language too rough already; and



though in long poems they may be sometimes suffered, it never can be faulty to forbear them.

Milton frequently uses, in his poems, the hypermetrical or redundant line of eleven syllables :

————— “ Thus it shall befall  
 “ Him, who, to worth in women overtrusting,  
 “ Lets her will rule.”—  
 “ I also err'd in over-much admiring.”

<sup>h</sup> Verses of this kind occur almost in every page ; but, though they are not unpleasing or

<sup>h</sup> *Verses of this kind &c.*] Dr. Johnson has not observed, that Milton admits, into his poetry, verses having two redundant syllables at the end ; as in *Par. Lost*, B. viii. 216.

“ Imbued, bring to their sweetnesss no satiety.”  
 Again, B. ix. 249.

“ For solitude sometimes is best society.”  
 Again, *Par. Reg.* B. i. 302.

“ Such solitude before choicest society.”  
 Such licences may be often observed in dramatick poetry. And thus Milton himself, in *Comus* :

“ And link'd itself to carnal sensuality.”  
 The brevity of these concluding syllables, however, may seem to exempt the lines from the charge of harshness. The pronunciation of *society*, indeed, is so weak, that it is admitted in the middle of an hypermetrical line, in Shakspeare, with little injury to the melody. See *K. Lear*, A. v. S. iii.

“ Shunn'd my abhorr'd (*society*;) but then, finding  
 “ Who 'twas that so endur'd, &c.”

There is perhaps, in this passage, what is properly called an hypermetrical pause ; which, a learned critick observes, will never offend in dramatick poetry, if not too frequently repeated.



dissonant, they ought not to be admitted into heroick poetry, since the narrow limits of our language allow us no other distinction of epick and tragick measures, than is afforded by the liberty of changing at will the terminations of the dramattick lines, and bringing them by that relaxation of metrical rigour nearer to prose.—

It is very difficult to write on the minuter parts of literature without failing either to please or to instruct. Too much nicety of detail disgusts the greatest part of readers; and to throw a multitude of particulars under general heads, and lay down rules of extensive comprehension, is to common understandings of little use. They, who undertake these subjects, are therefore always in danger, as one or other inconvenience arises to their imagination, of frightening us with rugged science, or amusing us with empty sound.

In criticising the work of Milton, there is, indeed, opportunity to intersperse passages that can hardly fail to relieve the languours of attention; and since, in examining the variety and choice of the pauses with which he has diver-

See Mitford's Essay upon the Harmony of Language, p. 128.  
Thus in *Comus*, v. 66.

“ To quench the drouth (*of Phœbus,*)—which as they  
taste.”

See also the same pauses, *ibid.* v. 302, 602.



fified his numbers, it will be necessary to exhibit the lines in which they are to be found, perhaps the remarks may be well compensated by the examples, and the irksomeness of grammatical disquisitions somewhat alleviated.

Milton formed his scheme of versification by the poets of Greece and Rome, <sup>i</sup> whom he proposed to himself for his models so far as the difference of his language from theirs would permit

<sup>i</sup> *whom he proposed to himself for his models &c.*] This may be particularly observed in the fine repetitions and turns of his words. Dr. Newton remarks, that a bare repetition of the words often gives great force and beauty to the sentence, as in *Iliad* xx. 371, &c. *Iliad* xii. 127, &c. and *Æneid* vii. 586, 7; but that Milton seldom repeats the words without the additional beauty of turning them also, as in *Par. Lost*, B. vii. 184.

“ *Glory to him, whose just avenging ire*

“ *Had driven out the ungodly from his fight*

“ *And the habitations of the just; to him*

“ *Glory and praise —*”

See also B. iii. 178, &c. B. vii. 25, &c. and particularly B. x. 850, 1. Yet Dryden has said, that he had in vain sought for these graces in the poetry of Milton. They may be found, however, in his earliest, as well as his latest, strains. See *Eleg.* iii. 47.

“ *Serpit odoriferas per opes levis aura Favoni,*

“ *Aura sub innumeris humida nata rosis.*”

And *Par. Reg.* B. ii. 9.

“ *Now missing him, their joy so lately found,*

“ *So lately found, and so abruptly gone.*”

And *Samf. Agon.* v. 16.

“ *Retiring from the popular noise, I seek*

“ *This unfrequented place to find some ease,*

“ *Ease to the body some, none to the mind.*”



the imitation. There are indeed many inconveniences inseparable from our heroick measure compared with that of Homer and Virgil; inconveniences, which it is no reproach to Milton not to have overcome, because they are in their own nature insuperable; but against which he has struggled with so much art and diligence, that he may at least be said to have deserved success.

The hexameter of the ancients may be considered as consisting of fifteen syllables, so melodiously disposed, that, as every one knows who has examined the poetical authors, very pleasing and sonorous lyrick measures are formed from the fragments of the heroick. It is, indeed, scarce possible to break them in such a manner but that *invenias etiam disjecti membra poetæ*, some harmony will still remain, and the due proportions of sound will always be discovered. This measure therefore allowed great variety of pauses, and great liberties of connecting one verse with another, because, wherever the line was interrupted, either part singly was musical. But the ancients seem to have confined this privilege to hexameters; for in their other measures, though longer than the English heroick, those who wrote after the refinements of versification venture so seldom to change their pauses, that every variation may be supposed rather a com-



pliance with necessity than the choice of judgement.

Milton was constrained within the narrow limits of a measure not very harmonious in the utmost perfection; the single parts, therefore, into which it was to be sometimes broken by pauses, were in danger of losing the very form of verse. This has, perhaps, notwithstanding all his care, sometimes happened.

As harmony is the end of poetical measures, no part of a verse ought to be so separated from the rest as not to remain still more harmonious than prose, or to show, by the disposition of the tones, that it is part of a verse. This rule in the old hexameter might be easily observed, but in English will very frequently be in danger of violation; for the order and regularity of accents cannot well be perceived in a succession of fewer than three syllables, which will confine the English poet to only five pauses; it being supposed, that, when he connects one line with another, he should never make a full pause at less distance than that of three syllables from the beginning or end of a verse.

That this rule should be universally and indispensably established, perhaps cannot be granted; something may be allowed to variety, and something to the adaptation of the numbers to the subject; but it will be found generally necessary,



and the ear will seldom fail to suffer by its neglect.

Thus, when a single syllable is cut off from the rest, it must either be united to the line with which the sense connects it, or be founded alone.

\* If it be united to the other line, it corrupts its harmony ; if disjoined, it must stand alone, and, with regard to music, be superfluous ; for there

\* *If it be united to the other line, it corrupts its harmony ;*] It must be noticed, however, that Milton often finishes the line with a monosyllabick adjective disjoined from the substantive. Nor are such verses perhaps inharmonious, if the pause and emphasis be duly observed. "This separation of sound between the quality and its subject, gives time," says Mr. Sheridan, "for the quality to make a stronger impression on us ; and therefore should never be used, but when the poet means that the quality, not the subject, should be the principal idea ; which is the case in the following instance :

————— " The *bright*  
" Pavement, | that like a sea of jasper shone —"

where the intention of the poet is, to fix our thoughts not on the pavement itself, but on the brightness of the pavement. And this is the use which Milton has always made of this arrangement ; as again,

————— " unless an age too late, or *cold*  
" Climate, | or years, damp my intended wing —"

————— " This happy place, our *sweet*  
" Recess, | and only consolation left —"

" Where it is evident, that it is the adjectives which are emphatick ; it is the *cold* climate, the *sweet* recess. And when to the emphasis there is superadded a pause of suspension, the attributes become still more distinguished." See Sheridan's *Lectures on the Art of Reading*, &c. vol. ii. p. 258.



is no harmony in a single sound, because it has no proportion to another :

————— “ Hypocrites aufterely talk,  
 “ Defaming as impure what God declares  
 “ *Pure* ; and commands to fome, leaves free to all.”

When two fyllables likewise are abfcinded from the reft, they evidently want fome affociate founds to make them harmonious :

“ Eyes ——— more wakeful than to droufe,  
 “ Charm'd with Arcadian pipe, the pastoral reed  
 “ Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. *Mean while,*  
 “ To re-falute the world with facred light,  
 “ Leucothea wak'd.”

“ He ended, and the fun gave fignal high  
 “ To the bright minifter that watch'd : *he blew*  
 “ His trumpet.”

“ Firft in his eaft the glorious lamp was feen,  
 “ Regent of day, and all the horizon round  
 “ Invested with bright rays, jocund to run  
 “ His longitude through Heaven's high road ; *the gray*  
 “ Dawn, and the Pleiades, before him danc'd  
 “ Shedding fweet influence.”

The fame defect is perceived in the following line, where the pause is at the fecond fyllable from the beginning :

————— “ the race  
 “ Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard  
 “ In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears  
 “ To rapture, till the favage clamour drown'd



“ Both harp and voice ; nor could the Muse defend  
 “ *Her son.* So fail not thou, who thee implores.”

When the pause falls upon the third syllable or the seventh, the harmony is better preserved ; but, as the third and seventh are weak syllables, the period leaves the ear unsatisfied, and in expectation of the remaining part of the verse :

————— “ He with his horrid crew  
 “ Lay vanquish’d, rolling in the fiery gulf  
 “ Confounded, though immortal : But his doom  
 “ Reserv’d him to more wrath ; for now the thought  
 “ Both of lost happiness, and lasting pain,  
 “ Torments *him.*”  
 “ God, ————— with frequent intercourse,  
 “ Thither will send his winged messengers  
 “ On errands of supernal grace. So sung  
 “ The glorious train ascending.”

It may be, I think, established as a rule, that a pause, which concludes a period, should be made for the most part upon a strong syllable, as the fourth, and sixth ; but those pauses, which only suspend the sense, may be placed upon the weaker. Thus the rest in the third line of the first passage satisfies the ear better than in the fourth ; and the close of the second quotation better than of the third :

————— “ The evil, soon  
 “ Driven back, redounded as a flood on those  
 “ From whom it *sprung* ; impossible to mix  
 “ With *blessedness.*”



---

" What we by day  
 " Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,  
 " One night or two with wanton growth derides  
 " Tending to *wild*."  
 " These paths and bowers doubt not but our joint hands  
 " Will keep from wilderiness with ease, as wide  
 " As we need walk, till younger hands ere long  
 " Assist *us*."

The rest in the fifth place has the same inconvenience as in the seventh, and third; that the syllable is weak:

" Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl,  
 " And fish with fish, to graze the herb all leaving,  
 " Devour'd each *other*: Nor stood much in awe  
 " Of man, but fled *him*, or, with countenance grim,  
 " Glar'd on him *passing*."

The noblest and most majestic pauses, which our versification admits, are upon the fourth and sixth syllables, which are both strongly founded in a pure and regular verse, and at either of which the line is so divided, that both members participate of harmony:

" But now at last the sacred influence  
 " Of light *appears*, and from the walls of Heaven  
 " Shoots far into the bosom of dim Night  
 " A glimmering *dawn*: Here Nature first begins  
 " Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire, &c."

But far above all others, if I can give any credit to my own ear, is the rest upon the sixth syllable; which, taking in a complete compass



of sound, such as is sufficient to constitute one of our lyrick measures, makes a full and solemn close. Some passages, which conclude at this stop, I could never read without some strong emotions of delight or admiration :

“ Before the hills appear’d, or fountain flow’d,  
 “ Thou with eternal Wisdom didst converse,  
 “ Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play  
 “ In presence of the Almighty Father, pleas’d  
 “ With thy celestial *song*.”

“ Or other worlds they seem’d, or happy isles,  
 “ Like those Hesperian gardens fam’d of old,  
 “ Fortunate fields, and groves, and flowery vales,  
 “ Thrice happy isles ; but who dwelt happy there  
 “ He staid not to *inquire*.”

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“ He blew  
 “ His trumpet, heard in Oreb since perhaps  
 “ When God descended, and perhaps once more  
 “ To sound at general *doom*.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *To sound at general doom.*] These beautiful pauses are indeed most frequent in Milton; and I cannot forbear adding to the examples, selected by Dr. Johnson, three passages in the *Comus* so exquisitely melodious, and at the same time so highly poetical and descriptive, that “the harp of Orpheus could not be more charming.” The first is that, in which Milton compliments the skill of Henry Lawes :

“ Who with his soft pipe, and smooth-dittied song,  
 “ Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,  
 “ And hush the waving *woods*—”

The next is applied to the Lady’s strains :

“ How sweetly did they float upon the wings  
 “ Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night,  
 “ At every fall smoothing the raven-down  
 “ Of darkness, till it *smil’d*!—”



If the poetry of Milton be examined, with regard to the pauses and flow of his verses into

The last, to the songs of Circe and the Syrens :

“ Who, as they sung, would take the prison'd soul,

“ And lap it in Elysium —”

The first line of the second of these passages, it may be observed, consists of pæons, formed of the pyrrhick and iambick ; which powerfully contribute to the beauty and expression :

“ How sweetly did they float upon the wings

“ Of silence —”

The pause on the last syllable of *silence* has also much effect. The fineness of Milton's pauses and flow of his verses into each other eminently appears in the very entrance of his *Paradise Lost*, in the first lines of which the same numbers, in every respect, are hardly once repeated ; as Mr. Say has observed in his *Remarks on the Numbers of Paradise Lost*, 1745, p. 126. And in the following lines the pause will be found in every part of the verse :

————— “ Yet not the more  
 “ Cease I to wander, where the Muses haunt  
 “ Clear *spring*, or shady grove, or sunny hill,  
 “ Smit with the love of sacred *song* ; but chief  
 “ Thee, *Sion*, and the flowery brooks beneath,  
 “ That wash thy hallow'd *feet*, and warbling flow,  
 “ Nightly I visit —  
 “ Then feed on *thoughts*, that voluntary move  
 “ Harmonious numbers ; as the wakeful bird  
 “ Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid  
 “ Tunes her nocturnal *note*. Thus with the year  
 “ Seasons return ; but not to me returns  
 “ *Day*, or the sweet approach of even or morn. —”  
 “ No sooner had the Almighty *ceas'd*, but all  
 “ The multitude of *Angels*, with a shout  
 “ Loud as from numbers without number, sweet  
 “ As from blest voices, uttering joy —”

Mr. Say observes, that “ the least agreeable pauses are those at the first, or before the last, syllable. These therefore are seldom



each other, it will appear, that he has performed all that our language would admit; and the

found in Milton but when they have some peculiar beauty, and when either the words or the ideas demand an emphasis to be laid on them." See his Remarks, &c. p. 145, and seq. Such is the beautiful picture, where Adam addresses Eve:

—————" Then with voice  
" *Mild*, as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes, &c."

The close of the passage, already cited from the third book of *Par. Lost*; where the pause at the first syllable, and before the last, together with a final pause, cannot but incline the reader to believe that the poet studied thus to express both the *loudness* and the *sweetness* of the angelick shout. See also B. vii. 322.

—————" The humble shrub,

" And bush with frizzled hair implicit: Last

" *Rose*, as in dance, the stately trees —"

The criticks have mentioned many other fine examples of the pause on the first syllable; as in *Par. Lost*, B. iv. 351, B. vi. 838, B. viii. 473, B. ix. 122, B. xi. 492, &c. And doctor Newton has also noticed the frequency of this beauty in Homer, as in *Iliad* i. 52, *Iliad* v. 147, 157, &c. The instances in Milton prove with how much sweetness and strength the trochee begins the verse, and how unemphatick would have been an iambus in their places.

Milton has also introduced the trochee into the second, third, and fourth parts of the verse:

" Sweetness *into* my heart, unfelt before —"

" All these our notions vain *sees and* derides."

" Of Eve, whose eye *darted* contagious fire."

Dr. Newton has cited the following verse as an instance of this kind, *Par. Lost*, B. i. 49.

" Who durst defy the *Om̄nipotent* to arms."

But, as Mr. Dunster, the learned editor of *Paradise Regained* remarks, in a Note on B. i. 302 of that poem, Dr. Newton read the line with a *classical eye*, and laid aside his *English ear*, when he thus marked *Om̄nipotent*. For, according to the invariable



comparison of his numbers with those who have cultivated the same manner of writing, will show that he excelled as much in the lower as the higher parts of his art, and that his skill in harmony was not less than his invention or his learning.—

It has been long observed, that the idea of beauty is vague and undefined; different in different minds, and diversified by time or place. It has been a term hitherto used to signify that which pleases us we know not why, and in our approbation of which we can justify ourselves only by the concurrence of numbers, without much power of enforcing our opinion upon others by any argument, but example and authority. It is, indeed, so little subject to the ex-

pronunciation of our language, the ictus falls so strong on the second syllable of *Omni*potent, that the first is comparatively short; and the verse, scanned accordingly, becomes a pure English Iambick. Many noble instances of the trochee in the third and fourth places of the verse occur in Milton's poetry. Dr. Pemberton proposed to place an iambus instead of a trochee, in the third movement of the following line; to make it, in his opinion, run smoother:

“ And towārdſ thē gāte rōllīng hēr bēſtiāl trāin—”

See his *Observations on Poetry*, 1738, p. 132. But, as Mr. Say has observed, an idea of ease and celerity would be painted in the proposed correction,

“ And rōllīng towārdſ thē gāte hēr bēſtiāl trāin;”

instead of a representation of the difficulty, the pain and the unwieldiness of Sin's motion, so admirably drawn by the sudden reverse of the numbers.



mination of reason, that Paschal supposes it to end where demonstration begins ; and maintains that, without incongruity and absurdity, we cannot speak of geometrical beauty.

To trace all the sources of that various pleasure which we ascribe to the agency of beauty, or to disentangle all the perceptions involved in its idea, would, perhaps, require a very great part of the life of Aristotle or Plato. It is, however, in many cases apparent, that this quality is merely relative and comparative ; that we pronounce things beautiful, because they have something which we agree, for whatever reason, to call beauty, in a greater degree than we have been accustomed to find it in other things of the same kind ; and that we transfer the epithet as our knowledge encreases, and appropriate it to higher excellence, when higher excellence comes within our view.

Much of the beauty of writing is of this kind ; and therefore Boileau justly remarks, that the books which have stood the test of time, and been admired through all the changes which the mind of man has suffered from the various revolutions of knowledge, and the prevalence of contrary customs, have a better claim to our regard than any modern can boast ; because the long continuance of their reputation proves that they are adequate to our faculties, and agreeable to nature.



It is, however, the task of criticism to establish principles ; to improve opinion into knowledge ; and to distinguish those means of pleasing which depend upon known causes and rational deduction, from the nameless and inexplicable elegancies which appeal wholly to the fancy, from which we feel delight, but know not how they produce it, and which may well be termed the enchantresses of the soul. Criticism reduces those regions of literature under the dominion of science, which have hitherto known only the anarchy of ignorance, the caprices of fancy, and the tyranny of prescription.

There is nothing in the art of versifying so much exposed to the power of imagination as the accommodation of the sound to the sense, or the representation of particular images, by the flow of the verse in which they are expressed. Every student has innumerable passages, in which he, and perhaps he alone, discovers such resemblances ; and since the attention of the present race of poetical readers seems particularly turned upon this species of elegance, I shall endeavour to examine how much these conformities have been observed by the poets, or directed by the criticks, how far they can be established upon nature and reason, and on what occasions they have been practised by Milton.

Homer, the father of all poetical beauty, has been particularly celebrated by Dionysius of



Halicarnassus, as “ he that, of all the poets, exhibited the greatest variety of sound ; for there are,” says he, “ innumerable passages, in which length of time, bulk of body, extremity of passion, and stillness of repose ; or, in which, on the contrary, brevity, speed, and eagerness, are evidently marked out by the sound of the syllables. Thus the anguish, and slow pace, with which the blind Polypheme groped out with his hands the entrance of his cave, are perceived in the cadence of the verses which describe it :”

Κύκλωψ δὲ σενάχων τε, καὶ ᾠδίνων ὀδύνῃσι,  
Χερσὶ ψηλαφῶν —

The critick then proceeds to show, that the efforts of Achilles struggling in his armour against the current of a river, sometimes resisting and sometimes yielding, may be perceived in the elisions of the syllables, the slow succession of the feet, and the strength of the consonants :

Δεινὸν δ' ἄμφ' Ἀχιλλῆα κυκώμενον ἴσατο κύμα,  
ᾧ Ωθεῖ δ' ἐν σάκει πίπλων ῥόος, εἰδὲ πόδεσσιν  
Εἶχε σπρίξασθαι —

When Homer describes the crush of men dashed against a rock, he collects the most unpleasing and harsh sounds :

Σὺν δὲ δύο μάρψας, ὥς σκύλακας ποτὶ γαίῃ  
Κόπτ'· ἐκ δ' ἐγκέφαλος χαμάδις ῥέε, δεῦε δὲ γαῖαν.



And, when he would place before the eyes something dreadful and astonishing, he makes choice of the strongest vowels, and the letters of most difficult utterance :

Τῇδ' ἐπὶ μὲν Γοργῶ βλοσυρῶπις ἐξεφάναιτο  
Δεινὸν δερκομένη, περὶ δὲ Δεῖμός τε, Φόβος τέ.

Many other examples Dionysius produces ; but these will sufficiently show, that either he was fanciful, or we have lost the genuine pronunciation ; for I know not whether in any one of these instances such similitude can be discovered. It seems, indeed, probable, that the veneration, with which Homer was read, produced many supposititious beauties ; for though it is certain, that the sound of many of his verses very justly corresponds with the things expressed, yet when the force of his imagination, which gave him full possession of every object, is considered together with the flexibility of his language, of which the syllables might be often contracted or dilated at pleasure, it will seem unlikely that such conformity should happen less frequently even without design.

It is not however to be doubted, that Virgil, who wrote amidst the light of criticism, and who owed so much of his success to art and labour, endeavoured, among other excellencies, to exhibit this similitude ; nor has he been less happy in this than in the other graces of versi-



fication. This felicity of his numbers was, at the revival of learning, displayed with great elegance by Vida, in his art of poetry.

From the Italian gardens Pope seems to have transplanted this flower, the growth of happier climates, into a soil less adapted to its nature, and less favourable to its encrease.

“ Soft is the strain when Zephyr gently blows,  
“ And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows ;  
“ But, when loud billows lash the sounding shore,  
“ The hoarse rough verse should, like the torrent, roar.  
“ When Ajax strives some rock’s vast weight to throw,  
“ The line too labours, and the words move slow ;  
“ Not so when swift Camilla scours the plain,  
“ Flies o’er the unbending corn, and skims along the  
“ main.”

From these lines, laboured with great attention, and celebrated by a rival wit, may be judged what can be expected from the most diligent endeavours after this imagery of sound. The verse, intended to represent the whisper of the vernal breeze, must be confessed not much to excell in softness or volubility ; and the smooth stream runs with a perpetual clash of jarring consonants. The noise and turbulence of the torrent is, indeed, distinctly imaged ; for it requires very little skill to make our language rough : But in those lines, which mention the effort of Ajax, there is no particular heaviness, obstruction, or delay. The swiftness of Camilla



is rather contrasted than exemplified: Why the verse should be lengthened to express speed, will not easily be discovered. In the dactyls, used for that purpose by the ancients, two short syllables were pronounced with such rapidity, as to be equal only to one long; they, therefore, naturally exhibit the act of passing through a long space in a short time. But the alexandrine, by its pause in the midst, is a tardy and stately measure; and the word *unbending*, one of the most sluggish and slow which our language affords, cannot much accelerate its motion.

These rules, and these examples, have taught our present criticks to inquire very studiously, and minutely, into sounds and cadences. It is, therefore, useful to examine with what skill they have proceeded; what discoveries they have made; and whether any rules can be established, which may guide us hereafter in such researches.—

The resemblance of poetick numbers to the subject which they mention or describe, may be considered as general or particular; as consisting in the flow and structure of a whole passage taken together; or as comprised in the sound of some emphatical and descriptive words; or in the cadence and harmony of single verses.

The general resemblance of the sound to the sense is to be found in every language, which



admits of poetry ; in every author, whose force of fancy enables him to impress images strongly on his own mind, and whose choice and variety of language readily supplies him with just representations. To such a writer it is natural to change his measures with his subject, even without any effort of the understanding, or intervention of the judgement. To revolve jollity and mirth, necessarily tunes the voice of a poet to gay and sprightly notes, as it fires his eyes with vivacity ; and reflection on gloomy situations, and disastrous events, will sadden his numbers, as it will cloud his countenance. But in such passages there is only the similitude of pleasure to pleasure, and of grief to grief, without any immediate application to particular images. The same flow of joyous versification will celebrate the jollity of marriage, and the exultation of triumph ; and the same languour of melody will suit the complaints of an absent lover, as of a conquered king.

It is scarcely to be doubted, that, in many occasions, we make the musick which we imagine ourselves to hear ; that we modulate the poem by our own disposition, and ascribe to the numbers the effects of the sense. We may observe in life, that it is not easy to deliver a pleasing message in an unpleasing manner ; and that we readily associate beauty and deformity with those



whom, for any reason, we love or hate. Yet it would be too daring to declare that all the celebrated adaptations of harmony are chimerical; that Homer had no extraordinary attention to the melody of his verse, when he described a nuptial festivity;

*Nύμφας δ' ἐκ θαλάμων, δαΐδων ὑπολαμπομενάων,  
Ἥγινεον ἀνὰ ἄστυ· πολὺς δ' ὑμέναιος ὀρώρει —*

that Vida was merely fanciful, when he supposed Virgil endeavouring to represent, by uncommon sweetness of numbers, the adventitious beauty of Æneas;

*“ Os humerósque deo similis : namque ipsa decoram*

*“ Cæsariem nato genetrix, luménque juventæ*

*“ Purpureum, et lætos oculis afflârat honores —”*

or that Milton did not intend to exemplify the harmony which he mentions;

*“ Fountains, and ye that warble, as ye flow,*

*“ Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.”*

That Milton understood the force of sounds well adjusted, and knew the compass and variety of the ancient measures, cannot be doubted, since he was both a musician and a critick; but he seems to have considered these conformities of cadence, as either not often attainable in our language, or as petty excellencies unworthy of his ambition; for it will not be found that he has always assigned the same cast of numbers to the



same subjects. He has given, in two passages, very minute descriptions of angelick beauty: But, though the images are nearly the same, the numbers will be found upon comparison very different.

“ And now a stripling Cherub he appears,  
 “ Not of the prime, yet such as in his face  
 “ Youth smil’d celestial, and to every limb  
 “ *Suitable grace diffus’d, so well he feign’d;*  
 “ Under a coronet his flowing hair  
 “ *In curls on either cheek play’d; wings he wore*  
 “ *Of many a colour’d plume, sprinkled with gold.”*

Some of the lines of this description are remarkably defective in harmony, and therefore by no means correspondent with that symmetrical elegance, and easy grace, which they are intended to exhibit. The failure, however, is fully compensated by the representation of Raphael, which equally delights the ear and imagination:

“ A Seraph wing’d: Six wings he wore, to shade  
 “ His lineaments divine; the pair that clad  
 “ Each shoulder broad, came mantling o’er his breast  
 “ With regal ornament; the middle pair  
 “ Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round  
 “ Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold  
 “ And colours dipt in Heaven; the third his feet  
 “ Shadow’d from either heel with feather’d mail,  
 “ Sky-tinctur’d grain. Like Maia’s son he stood,  
 “ And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance fill’d  
 “ The circuit wide.”——

The adumbration of particular and distinct images, by an exact and perceptible resemblance



of sound, is sometimes studied, and sometimes casual. Such are *stridor*, *ballo*, and *boatus*, in Latin; and, in English, to *growl*, to *buzz*, to *bifs*, and to *jar*. Words of this kind give to a verse the proper similitude of sound, without much labour of the writer, and such happiness is therefore to be attributed rather to fortune than skill; yet they are sometimes combined with great propriety, and undeniably contribute to enforce the impression of the idea. <sup>m</sup> We hear the passing arrow in this line of Virgil;

“ Et fugit horrendum stridens elapsa sagitta; ”

<sup>n</sup> and the creaking of Hell-gates, in the description of Milton;

<sup>m</sup> *We hear the passing arrow &c.*] Do we not also hear the “ *bifs of rustling wings?* ” Par. Lost, B. i. 768.—See also B. ii. 661, B. vi. 209, 210, B. vii. 431, and the Note there.

<sup>n</sup> *and the creaking of Hell-gates,*] The imitation here turns on the force of the words *jarring*, *grate*, and *harsh*; on the resemblance between the sign and the idea. “ In this, and in every other instance,” Mr. Webb observes, “ where the resemblance is determined by the sound, the characters of poetry and musick are directly opposed; for, the nature of articulation strictly considered, it will appear that, in poetry, the imitations of harsh and rude sounds must be most perfect; in musick, it is just the reverse. It was for this reason, that our incomparable Milton, in his imitations of musical ideas, threw the force of the imitation, not on the sound, but on the movement :

————— “ save where silence yields  
“ To the night-warbling bird, that now awake  
“ Tunes sweetest his *love-labour'd* song.”

See *Observations on Poetry and Musick*, 1769, p. 140. This dis-



————— “ On a sudden open fly  
“ With impetuous recoil and jarring sound  
“ The infernal doors, and on their hinges grate  
“ Harsh thunder.”

But many beauties of this kind, which the moderns, and perhaps the ancients, have observed, seem to be the product of blind reverence acting upon fancy. Dionysius himself tells us, that the sound of Homer's verses sometimes exhibits the idea of corporeal bulk: Is not this a discovery nearly approaching to that of the blind man, who, after long inquiry into the nature of the scarlet colour, found that it represented nothing so much as the clangour of a trumpet? the representative power of poetick harmony consists of sound and measure; of the force of the syllables singly considered, and of the time in which they are pronounced. Sound can resemble nothing but sound, and time can measure nothing but motion and duration.

The criticks, however, have struck out other similitudes; nor is there any irregularity of numbers which credulous admiration cannot discover to be eminently beautiful. Thus the propriety of each of these lines has been celebrated by

tion, of an imitation by movement, and an imitation by sound, he remarks in another place, must be carefully observed in the application of that general maxim,

“ The sound must seem an echo to the sense.”



writers, whose opinion the world has reason to regard ;

“ Vertitur interea cœlum, et ruit oceano nox —”

“ Sternitur, exanimisque tremens procumbit humi bos—”

“ Parturiunt montes, nascetur ridiculus mus —”

If all these observations are just, there must be some remarkable conformity between the sudden succession of night to day, ° the fall of an ox under a blow, and the birth of a mouse from a mountain ; since we are told of all these images, that they are very strongly impressed by the same form and termination of the verse.

We may, however, without giving way to enthusiasm, admit that some beauties of this kind may be produced. A sudden stop at an unusual syllable may image the cessation of action, or the pause of discourse ; and Milton has very happily imitated the repetitions of an echo :

————— “ I fled, and cried out *Death !*

“ Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh’d

“ From all her caves, and back resounded *Death !*”

[° the fall of an ox &c.] Another excellent critick has also said, “ I am not at all struck with this imitation, procumbit humi bos ; and the reason must be, that there is nothing either pleasing or interesting in the object. But, let the idea be of a nature to engage our attention, and we are no longer indifferent to its accord :

————— “ Scarce from his mould

“ Behemoth, biggest born of earth, upheav’d

“ His vastness.”

See Webb’s *Observations on Poetry and Musick*, 1769, p. 146.



¶ The measure or time of pronouncing may be varied so as very strongly to represent, not only

¶ *The measure or time of pronouncing &c.*] This effect, derived principally from the situation of the pause, has been illustrated in the following passages :

“ All night the dreadful Angel,—unpursued,  
 “ Through Heaven's wide champain held his way—till Morn,  
 “ Wak'd by the circling Hours, with rosy hand  
 “ Unbarr'd the gates of light.”

————— “ God had bid the ground be dry,  
 “ All but within those banks where rivers now  
 “ Stream,—and perpetual draw their humid train.”

On the latter of which, Mr. Richardson has remarked, that “ you cannot read the last line of it otherwise than slowly, and so as to give your mind a picture of the thing described.”—On both, Mr. Mitford has observed, that “ the pause, by assigning so large a portion of the verse to those members of the sentence where Heaven's wide champain and the perpetual flow of the rivers are mentioned, very much helps the idea of the vast tract of country through which these flow, and of the immense length of the Angel's course. But Milton has not left the expression to the pause alone : He has made the lines of a really unusual length :

“ Thrōugh Héaven's | wīdē chām | pāin hēld | hīs wāy | tīll Mōrn̄.”

“ Strēām, and | pērpētū | āl drāw | thēir hū | mīd trāin̄.”

“ Allowing two times to a long syllable, and one to a short one, these lines have at least twenty times each ; a circumstance not common in the epick pentameter, and of itself sufficient to make the movement necessarily slow.” See the *Essay* &c., as before, p. 144.—To these instances of retarded pronunciation I may add the echoing of the sound to the sense in a line, finely descriptive of accelerated motion ; where the heavenly Angels, after standing a while in trouble at having beheld the effects of Satan's artillery, thus instantaneously recover themselves :

“ Their arms away they threw, and to the hills

“ *Light as the lightning glimpse they ran, they flew.*”



the modes of external motion, but the quick or slow succession of ideas, and consequently the passions of the mind. This at least was the power of the spondaick and dactylick harmony ; but our language can reach no eminent diversities of sound. We can indeed sometimes, by incumbering and retarding the line, show the difficulty of a progress made by strong efforts and with frequent interruptions ; or mark a slow and heavy motion. Thus Milton has imaged the toil of Satan struggling through chaos ;

“ So he with difficulty and labour hard

“ Mov'd on, with difficulty and labour he —”

Thus he has described the leviathans, or whales,

“ 1 Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait.”

1 *Wallowing unwieldy* &c.] The learned critick just mentioned remarks, that this line has indeed been admired for its expressive unwieldiness. “ Its form,” he adds, “ is however of a kind perfectly musical, and by no means peculiarly suited to give the idea of unwieldiness. The expression is in reality not numerical, but literal ; a kind of expression of which our language has much more than the Latin or any of the descendants of the Latin ; perhaps more than the Greek itself. When used without affectation, it has an agreeable and powerful effect in descriptive poetry ; and there are many beautiful examples of it in Milton's account of the Creation.—In *Paradise Lost*, B. ii. 933, there is a beautiful instance of the union of literal and numerical expression :

“ Fluttering his pennons vain, plumb down he drops

“ Ten thousand fathom deep —”

See *the Essay upon the Harmony of Language*, p. 132. The same author objects, and justly I think, to the accentuation on the first syllable of *unwieldy*, *Par. Lost*, B. iv. 345.



But he has at other times neglected such representations, <sup>r</sup> as may be observed in the volubility and levity of the following lines, which express an action tardy and reluctant :

---

“ Descent and fall  
 “ To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,  
 “ When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear  
 “ Insulting, and pursued us through the deep,  
 “ With what compulsion and laborious flight  
 “ We sunk thus low ? The ascent is easy then.”

In another place he describes the gentle glide of ebbing waters in a line remarkably rough and halting :

---

“ Bears, tigers, ounces, pards,  
 “ Gamboll'd before them ; the *unwieldy* elephant  
 “ To make them mirth us'd all his might —”

Where Dr. Bentley says, the poet intended the accent on the first syllable, in order to make the verse itself *unwieldy*, that the reader might feel as well as understand it. But, as Mr. Mitford observes, with the common accentuation of the word, the accentuation of the verse is equally good ; and the expression, by the admission of a hyperrhythmical syllable in the third foot which seems to consist of three long syllables, perhaps greater :

“ Gamboll'd before | them̄ ; th' un̄wiél|dý ě|lēphānt̄ —”

See other instances of the trisyllabick foot in the Note <sup>h</sup>, p. 212.

<sup>r</sup> *as may be observed in the volubility &c.*] We must remember the character of the speaker ; Moloch, the *most impetuous* Spirit that fought in Heaven. The poet perhaps did not intend, in the lines cited by Dr. Johnson, the most distant representation of any action. He rather finely discriminates, by the rapidity of the language, the rash and desperate sentiments of him who is the *most eager* to renew the war against God, and who “ appears incensed at his companions for losing so much time as *even to deliberate* upon it.”



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“ tripping ebb, that stole  
 “ With soft foot towards the Deep ; who now had stopt  
 “ His sluices.”

It is not indeed to be expected, that the sound should always assist the meaning, but it ought never to counteract it ; and therefore Milton has here certainly committed a fault like that of the player, who looked on the earth when he implored the heavens, and to the heavens when he addressed the earth.

Those, who are determined to find in Milton an assemblage of all the excellencies which ennobled all other poets, will perhaps be offended that I do not celebrate his versification in higher terms ; for there are readers who discover that, in this passage,

“ So stretch'd out huge in length the Arch-Fiend lay,”  
 a *long* form is described in a *long* line ; but the truth is, that length of body is mentioned only in a *flow* line, to which it has the resemblance only of time to space, of an hour to a maypole.

The same turn of ingenuity might perform wonders upon the description of the ark :

“ Then, from the mountain hewing timber tall,  
 “ Began to build a vessel of huge bulk ;  
 “ Measur'd by cubit, length, and breadth, and highth.”

In these lines the poet apparently designs to fix the attention upon bulk ; but this is effected by the enumeration, not by the measure ; for what



analogy can there be between modulations of sound, and corporeal dimensions?

Milton, indeed, seems only to have regarded this species of embellishment so far as not to reject it, when it came unfought; which would often happen to a mind so vigorous, employed upon a subject so various and extensive. He had, indeed, a greater and a nobler work to perform: A single sentiment of moral or religious truth, a single image of life or nature, would have been cheaply lost for a thousand echoes of the cadence to the sense; and he, who had undertaken to "vindicate the ways of God to Man," might have been accused of neglecting his cause, \* had he lavished much of his attention upon syllables and sounds. JOHNSON.

\* *had he lavished much of his attention upon syllables and sounds.*] The poetry of Milton, if I may venture to differ from the authority of Dr. Johnson, abounds with instances of studied management in the construction of the numbers; which, admitting different and opposite movements, represent various passions and ideas, and exhibit the finest gradations of poetick harmony. How truly adapted to the subject (to mention an instance or two) are the smooth and beautiful numbers, in which the poet relates the gentle tale of Adonis, in his first book of *Paradise Lost*; and the remarkable diversification of pauses, by which, in the eleventh book, the groans of the sick are, as it were, heard, the busy employment of Despair is marked, and the threatening dart of Death is seen! What an example is the description of Satan's rebellion and punishment in the beginning of his divine poem; in which passage, as an elegant critick observes, the poet sets out with almost a prosaick weakness of verse; whence, rising gradually, like the swell of an organ, he soars into the highest dignity



of sound! See Webb's *Remarks on the Beauties of Poetry*, 1762, p. 14. And *Par. Lost*, B. i. 34 to 50. See also B. i. 663 to 670, in which passage the elevated numbers represent the circumstances to the life, and contribute highly to the sublimity of the description. With similar attention to musical effect, the sounds are made, where the subject changes to what is soft and tender, to diminish gradually and breathe impressive calmness. As in *Par. Lost*, B. iii. 402.

“ Back from pursuit thy Powers with loud acclaim  
 “ Thee only extoll'd, Son of thy Father's might,  
 “ To execute fierce vengeance on his foes :  
 “ *Not so on Man ; him through their malice fall'n,*  
 “ *Father of mercy and grace, thou didst not doom*  
 “ *So strictly, but much more to pity incline.*”

Mr. Webb remarks, that this fall of notes, or weakness in the movement, is in the true spirit of musical imitation ; and that the poet was here so sensible of the happiness, that in the moment after he repeats the very same movement, and contrasts it by measures the most lofty and sonorous :

“ No sooner did thy dear and only Son  
 “ Perceive thee purpos'd *not to doom frail Man*  
 “ *So strictly, but much more to pity inclin'd* ——  
 “ Hail, Son of God, Saviour of Men! Thy name  
 “ Shall be the copious matter of my song  
 “ Henceforth, and never shall my harp thy praise  
 “ Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin.”

Mr. Say indeed has noticed the art so often and plainly used by Milton ; the carelessness of his numbers in some places, in order more powerfully to contrast the musical flow of those which immediately follow. Thus in *Par. Lost*, B. iii. 35.

“ Blind Thamyras, and blind Mæonides,  
 “ And Tiresias, and Phineus, prophets old :  
 “ *Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move*  
 “ *Harmonious numbers, &c.*”

Again, in *Par. Reg.* B. ii. 360, where, after the same negligent enumeration of persons,



— “ knights of Logres, or of Lyones,  
 “ Lancelot, or Pelleas, or Pellenore ;”  
 there follow some of the sweetest and most imitative verses in all his poetry :

“ *And all the while harmonious airs were heard*  
 “ *Of chiming strings, or charming pipes ; and winds*  
 “ *Of gentlest gale Arabian odours fann'd*  
 “ *From their soft wings, and Flora's earliest smells.*”—

The laws of versification seem to have prescribed, that the concluding foot of the English pentameter should be an iambus. It may be proper to observe with how much judgement Milton has frequently converted this foot into a spondee. As in *Par. Lost*, B. vii. 216.

“ Silence, ye troubled Waves, and thou Deep, peace—”  
 “ a beauty of the same kind,” doctor Newton says, “ as the spondee in the fifth place in Greek and Latin hexameters, of which there are some memorable examples in Virgil, as when he speaks of low valleys, *Georg.* iii. 276, or when he would describe the majesty of the gods, *Ecl.* iv. 49, *Æn.* viii. 679, or great caution and circumspection, *Æn.* ii. 68, or a great interval between two men running, *Æn.* v. 320.”—I conceive that Milton also intended the last foot of the following verse to be a spondee, as more dignified and impressive than the accentuation, not uncommon indeed in our old poetry, of *supreme* on the first syllable, *Par. Lost*, B. i. 735.

“ And sat as Princes, whom the Supreme King  
 “ Exalted to such power —”

For the same reason, a spondee seems to be the measure of the third foot in *Comus*, v. 217.

“ That He, the Supreme Good, to whom all things ill  
 “ Are but as slavish ministers &c.”

The feet, immediately preceding *supreme*, being in both instances unaccented, or pyrrhicks, as in the following line of *Comus*, which exhibits, with fine effect, a spondee in the first, third, and fifth places :

— “ their way  
 “ Liēs through thē pērplex'd paths of this drear wood.”



I must not omit to mention the same unaccented foot, followed by a spondee, in *Par. Lost*, B. iv. 719.

“ On him *who* *had* stole Jove’s authentick fire —”

because Dr. Pemberton pronounces this line to be faulty by the two short syllables, which constitute the second foot; and which he proposes thus to correct, *Observ. on Poetry*, p. 132.

“ On him, *who* Jove’s authentick fire had stole.”

But the spondee, as it stands in the poet’s own line, gives a force to the expression which no other collocation of the words can produce. I consider Milton’s happy positions of the spondee as a principal beauty in his versification. The masterly hand of Fuseli, whose pictures and sketches from the poetical works of Milton have given new grace and pathos to many a scene, perhaps could hardly have exhibited, with greater precision, on the canvas, the imagery which the following numbers express:

“ From his slack hand the garland wreath’d for Eve

“ Down dropt —”

We see also the dejected Samson, where he says,

“ So much I feel my genial spirits droop,

“ My hopes all flat —”

Nor can we forbear to notice the energy of the same measure, where the sword of Michael met

“ The sword of Satan with steep force to smite

“ Descending, and in half cut sheer —”

in which passage not only the word *descending* is admirably placed, as doctor Newton has observed, to express the sense; but the spondee, followed by a pause, fixes also the imagination on the divided sword of Satan. And I am persuaded that Pope had attended to the construction of this passage, when, in translating the celebrated verse of Homer, which describes the sword of Menelaus snapping short, *Iliad* iii. 363, he wrote the following lines:

“ The brittle steel, unfaithful to his hand,

“ Broke short:—the fragments glitter’d on the sand.”



Pope, however, has been supposed to have here imitated the passage in Virgil, where the sword of Turnus is also shattered into various fragments, *Æn.* xii. 740.

“ Mortalis mucro, glacies ceu futilis, ic̄tu

“ *Diffiluit* :—fulvâ resplendent fragmina arenâ.”

But he seems to have had the Miltonick spondee also in his mind.

These observations (not to lengthen the Note with many other proofs which might be adduced, and which indeed will escape the notice of few readers,) sufficiently prove, it is presumed, the genius and felicity of Milton in adapting sound to sense. That there are absonous lines in the *Paradise Lost*, will not be denied; of which some might be the effect of negligence: “To maintain an unremitted excellence of versification through so long a poem,” says a very judicious writer, “was perhaps beyond the effort of human excellence.” Pye’s *Comment. on the Poetic of Aristotle*, p. 474. Of these lines, however, many might also have been intentionally so constructed. Cowper, the impressive Cowper, who in modern days has so sweetly awakened the Miltonick harp, observes that “a line, rough in itself, has yet its recommendations; it saves the ear the pain of an irksome monotony, and seems even to add greater smoothness to others. Milton, whose ear and taste were exquisite, has exemplified in his *Paradise Lost* the effect of this practice frequently.” *Pref. to the Translation of the Iliad*, p. x. Thus we may observe that he repeats verses, which some have pronounced harsh and unmusical. Yet the repetition implies that *he* was at least not displeased with those verses. Thus, in the sixth book of *Paradise Lost*:

“ Un̄iversal reproach, far worse to bear

“ Than violence —”

As in *Samson Agonistes*, v. 175.

“ Un̄iversally crown’d with highest praises —”

notwithstanding the line might have been written more smoothly,

“ Crown’d un̄iversally with highest praises.”

Again, in the same book of *Par. Lost*,

“ Burnt after them tō thē bōttōmlēss pit —”



So, in *Par. Reg.* B. i. 361.

“ With them from blifs tō thē bōtōmlēfs dēep.”

In the same metre the following verse concludes, which prevents the ungraceful accentuation of the second syllable in *audibly*, maintained by some criticks, *Par. Lost*, B. vii. 518.

“ Present ?) thus to his Son aūdibly spake.”

But the great poet has been charged with sometimes laying the accent on insignificant particles. If it were requisite to lay the stress of the voice on sounds naturally short, the charge might seem formidable. How little attention it deserves, however, may be seen in the following instance among others accented in a similar manner, *Par. Lost*, B. ii. 702.

“ Thy lingering, or with one stroke of this dart —”

The poet's imagery and meaning would be destroyed by such lifeless accentuation. The pronunciation may be rather thus marked :

“ Thy língěrĩng, | or wĩth *one* strōke of *this* dart —”

because “ the emphasis on the word *one*,” says Mr. Sheridan, “ marks the peculiar property of the dart of Death, which does its business at once, and needs no second stroke ; and that on the word *this* presents the dart to view, and the image of Death shaking it at Satan.” *Lectures &c.* as before, p. 280.

It has been also asserted, that the reader cannot follow, with any tolerable propriety, what is called irregular accentuation in these and similar passages :

“ And flowers aloft, *shādĩng* the fount of life —”

“ Abject and lost lay these *cōv'ring* the flood —”

But *shādĩng* is a trochee, of which we have seen many pleasing instances in various parts of the verse ; and *cōv'ring* is a dactyl ; dactyls being admitted by Milton, like trochees, into the first, third, and fourth places. And are these lines, thus pronounced, inharmonious ?—

I must not conclude these remarks on Milton's versification without noticing the alliteration, sometimes observable in his poetry ; a figure, much abused indeed by our old poets, and in consequence finely ridiculed by Shakspeare. But to the following



instances few perhaps will affix the name of triflings, or rather not concede the praise of beauty :

- “ Who with his soft pipe, and smooth-dittied song,  
 “ *Well* knows to still the wild winds when they roar,  
 “ And hush the waving woods —” *Comus*, v. 86.  
 “ These paths and bowers doubt not but our joint hands  
 “ *Will* keep from wilderiness with ease, as wide  
 “ As *we* need walk —” *Par. Lost*, B. ix. 244.  
 “ Defac’d, deflower’d, and now to death devote.” *Ib.* 901.

Such instances of beginning several words in the same verse with the same letter, and even of continuing the alliteration in the next verse, may be found in the best classic writers.

In the proofs of beautiful versification which have been adduced, Milton has been considered as a writer only of blank verse. It may be added, that his rhyming poetry would have placed him high in the rank of English bards, had his blank verse never been written. Lord Monboddo, in some observations with which he was long since pleased to honour me, observes, “ I hold Milton to be the best rhyming poet in English, as well as the best writer of blank verse.—He has given to his rhyming poetry a variety by long and short verses, and by rhymes as much varied as possible ; by distich rhymes, alternate rhymes, and rhymes often at the distance of four lines ; which altogether make such a variety as is not to be found in any other rhyming poem, except that short poem of Dryden’s upon St. Cecilia’s day. And he has given one variety to his rhyming verse, which is not to be found even in Dryden’s Ode : and that is a change of the measure of the verse from the iambick, when the accented syllable of the foot is last, to the trochaick, when it is first ; which changes altogether the flow of the verse, and adapts it to subjects very different.”

I have conversed indeed with few persons on the subject of Milton’s versification, who have not acknowledged themselves, in this respect,

- “ held with his melodious harmony,  
 “ In willing chains and sweet captivity.”



AN INQUIRY INTO THE  
ORIGIN OF PARADISE LOST.

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“THE petty circumstances, by which great minds are led to the first conception of great designs, are so various and volatile, that nothing can be more difficult to discover: Fancy in particular is of a nature so airy, that the traces of her step are hardly to be discerned; ideas are so fugitive, that if poets, in their life time, were questioned concerning the manner in which the seeds of considerable productions first arose in their mind, they might not always be able to answer the inquiry; can it then be possible to succeed in such an inquiry concerning a mighty genius, who has been consigned more than a century to the tomb, especially when, in the records of his life, we can find no positive evidence on the point in question? However trifling the chances it may afford of success, the investigation is assuredly worthy our pursuit; for, as an accomplished critick has said, in speaking of another poet, with his usual felicity of discernment and expression, *the inquiry cannot be void of entertainment whilst Milton is our constant theme: whatever may be the fortune of the chase, we are sure it will lead us through pleasant prospects and a fine country.*” Hayley’s *Conjectures on the Origin of Paradise Lost.*

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THE earliest observation respecting the Origin of *Paradise Lost* appears to have been made by Voltaire, in the year 1727. He was



then studying in England ; and had become so well acquainted with our language as to publish an English essay on epick poetry ; in which are the following words :

“ Milton, as he was travelling through Italy in his youth, saw at Florence a comedy called *Adamo*, written by one Andreini, a player, and dedicated to Mary de Medicis, queen of France. The subject of the play was the Fall of Man ; the actors, God, the Devils, the Angels, Adam, Eve, the Serpent, Death, and the seven mortal Sins : That topick, so improper for a drama, but so suitable to the absurd genius of the Italian stage (as it was at that time), was handled in a manner entirely conformable to the extravagance of the design. The scene opens with a Chorus of Angels ; and a Cherubim thus speaks for the rest : *“ Let the rainbow be the fiddlestick of the fiddle of the heavens ! let the planets be the notes of our musick ! let time beat carefully the measure, and the winds make the sharps, &c.* Thus the

- “ A la lira del Ciel Iri fia l’arco,
- “ Corde le sfere sien, note le stelle,
- “ Sien le pause e i sospir l’aure novelle,
- “ E ’l tempo i tempi à misurar non parco !”

*Choro d’ Angeli, &c.* *Adamo*, ed. 1617.

The better judgement of the author, Mr. Walker observes, determined him to omit this chorus in a subsequent edition of his drama : accordingly it does not appear in that of Perugia, 1641. See the *Historical Memoir on Italian Tragedy*, 1799, p. 169.



play begins, and every scene rises above the last in profusion of impertinence !

“ Milton pierced through the absurdity of that performance to the hidden majesty of the subject, which, being altogether unfit for the stage, yet might be (for the genius of Milton, and his only,) the foundation of an epick poem.

“ He took from that ridiculous trifle the first hint of the noblest work, which human imagination has ever attempted, and which he executed more than twenty years after.”

That Milton had certainly read the sacred drama of Andreini, is the opinion both of Dr. Joseph Warton and of Mr. Hayley. Another elegant critick has observed, that Voltaire may have related a tradition perhaps current in England at the time it was visited by him ; <sup>b</sup> “ a period at which, it may be presumed, some of the contemporaries of Milton were living, for he was then only about fifty years dead. Milton, with the candour which is usually united with true genius, probably acknowledged to his friends his obligations to the Italian dramatist, and the floating tradition met the ardent inquiries of the French poet.” It may be worth mentioning here, that Dante, according to the account of some Italian criticks <sup>c</sup>, took the hint

<sup>b</sup> Hist. Mem. on Ital. Tragedy, p. 170.

<sup>c</sup> Warton's Hist. of Eng. Poetry, vol. iii. p. 241.



of his *Inferno* from a nocturnal representation of Hell, exhibited in 1304 on the river Arno at Florence; and that Tasso is said to have<sup>d</sup> conceived the idea of writing his *Aminta* at the representation, in 1567, of *Lo Sfortunato* of Agostino Argenti in Ferrara.

From the *Adamo* of Andreini a poetical extract, as well as the summary of the arguments of each act and scene, were given by Dr. War-ton, in an appendix to the second volume of his *Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope*, 1782. Mr. Hayley has cited other specimens of the poetry in this “spirited, though irregular and fantastick, composition;” from which Milton’s fancy is supposed to have caught fire. The reader will find a few quotations also, from this rare and curious drama, in the Notes on *Paradise Lost*. But, if the *Adamo* be examined with the utmost nicety, Milton will be found no servile copyist: He will be found, as in numberless instances of his extensive, his curious, and careful reading, to have improved the slightest hints into the finest descriptions. Milton indeed, with the skill and grace of an Apelles or a Phidias, has often animated the rude sketch and the shapeless block.<sup>e</sup> I mean not to detract from the

<sup>d</sup> Hist. Mem. ut supr.

<sup>e</sup> From the remarks of Prince Giacomo Giustiniani, (the accomplished governour of Perugia,) on the *Adamo*, which were transmitted to Mr. Walker, and by Mr. Walker obligingly com-



Italian drama ; but let it here be remarked once for all, in Milton's own words, that <sup>f</sup> “ *borrowing*, if it be *not bettered* by the borrower, among good authors is accounted *plagiarie*.” Let the bitterest enemies of Milton prove, if they can, whether the author of this ingenuous remark may be exhibited in such a light ; rather let them acknowledge that, in fully comparing him with those authors who have written on similar subjects, he must ever be considered as

————— “ above the rest  
 “ In shape and gesture proudly eminent.”

The drama of Andreini was so little known when Dr. Birch was writing the Life of Milton, that Warburton, in a letter to that learned bio-

municated to me, it appears that the criticks of Italy consider Milton not a little indebted to their countryman. I will cite the opinion of the liberal and elegant Tiraboschi : “ Certo benchè *L' Adamo* dell' Andreini sia in confronto del *Paradiso Perduto* ciò che è il Poema di Ennio in confronto a quel di Virgilio, nonclimeno non può negarsi ch'è le idee gigantesche, delle quali l' autore Inglese ha abbellito il suo Poema, di Satana, che entra nel Paradiso terrestre, e arde d' invidia al vedere la felicità dell' Uomo, del congresso de Demonj, della battaglia degli Angioli contra Lucifero, e più altre sommigianti immagini veggonsi nell' *Adamo* adombrate per modo, che a me sembra molto credibile, che anche il Milton dalle immondezze, se così è lecito dire, dell' Andreini raccogliesse l'oro, di cui adorno il suo Poema. Per altro *L' Adamo* dell' Andreini, benchè abbia alcuni tratti di pessimo gusto, ne hà altri ancora, che si posson proporre come modello di eccellente poesia.”

<sup>f</sup> Eiconoclastes, Prose-Works, edit. 1698, fol. vol. ii. p. 509.



grapher, preserved in the British Museum, ridicules the relation of Voltaire. “It is said that it appeared by a MS. in Trin. Coll. Camb. that Milton intended an opera of the *Paradise Lost*. Voltaire, on the credit of this circumstance, amongst a heap of impertinency, pretends boldly that he took the hint from a comedy he saw at Florence, called *Adamo*. Others imagined too he conceived the idea in Italy; now I will give you good proof that all this is a vision. In one of his political pamphlets, written early by him, I forget which, he tells the world he had conceived a notion of an epick poem on the story of Adam or Arthur. What then will you say must we do with this circumstance of the Trin. Coll. MS? I believe I can explain that matter. When the parliament got uppermost, they suppressed the playhouses; on which Sir John Denham, I think, and others, contrived to get operas performed. This took with the people, and was much in their taste; and religious ones being the favourites of that sanctified people, was, I believe, what inclined Milton at that time (and neither before nor after) to make an opera of it.”—Even at a much later period, the very existence of the *Adamo* was denied; for Mr. Mickle, an ardent admirer of Milton, and the very able translator of The Lusiad, calls it “<sup>s</sup> a

<sup>s</sup> Dissertation prefixed to the Translation of the Lusiad, 2d edit. Ox. p. ccii.



Comedy which nobody ever saw ;” and observes, “ that even some *Italian literati* declared that no such author [as Andreini] was known in Italy.” Dr. Johnson also, in his *Life of Milton*, calls Voltaire’s relation “ a wild, unauthorized, story.”

That Milton had conceived, in his younger days, as Dr. Warburton has observed, the notion of an epick poem on the story of Arthur, is evident from his own words in the *Manfuf*, v. 80, &c. and the *Epitaphium Damonis*, v. 155, &c: Where fee the Notes, vol. vi. p. 357, and p. 373. Mr. Hayley, with his ufual acutenefs and elegance of language, remarks that “ it feems very probable that Milton, in his collection of Italian books, had brought the *Adamo* of Andreini to England ; and that the perufal of an author, wild indeed, and abounding in grotesque extravagance ; yet now and then fhining with pure and united rays of fancy and devotion, firft gave a *new bias* to the imagination of the Englifh poet, or, to ufe the expreffive phrafe of Voltaire, firft revealed to him the *hidden majefty of the fubject*. The apoftate angels of Andreini, though fometimes hideoufly and abfurdly difgufting, yet occasionally sparkle with fuch fire as might awaken the emulation of Milton.”

The Englifh reader is indebted to Mr. Hayley for the following analyfis of the arguments of each act and fcene in the *Adamo*.



“ THE CHARACTERS.

“ GOD the FATHER.

“ CHORUS of SERAPHIM, CHERUBIM, and ANGELS.

“ The archangel MICHAEL.

“ ADAM.

“ EVE.

“ A CHERUB, the guardian of ADAM.

“ LUCIFER.

“ SATAN.

“ BEELZEBUB.

“ The SEVEN mortal SINS.

“ The WORLD.

“ The FLESH.

“ FAMINE.

“ LABOUR.

“ DESPAIR.

“ DEATH.

“ VAIN GLORY.

“ SERPENT.

“ VOLANO, an infernal messenger.

“ CHORUS of PHANTOMS.

“ CHORUS of fiery, airy, aquatick, and infernal  
“ SPIRITS.”

ACT I. SCENE I. “ Chorus of Angels, singing the glory of God.—After their hymn, which serves as a prologue, God the Father, Angels, Adam and Eve.—God calls to Lucifer, and bids him survey with confusion the wonders of his power.—He creates Adam and Eve—their delight and gratitude.

SCENE 2. “ Lucifer, arising from Hell—he expresses his enmity against God, the good Angels, and Man.

SCENE 3. “ Lucifer, Satan, and Beelzebub.—Lucifer excites his associates to the destruction of Man, and calls other Demons from the abyſs to conſpire for that purpoſe.



SCENES 4, 5, and 6. “ Lucifer, summoning seven distinct Spirits, commissions them to act under the character of the seven mortal Sins, with the following names :

|             |      |           |
|-------------|------|-----------|
| “ MELECANO  | ———— | PRIDE.    |
| “ LURCONE   | ———— | ENVY.     |
| “ RUSPICANO | ———— | ANGER.    |
| “ ARFARAT   | ———— | AVARICE.  |
| “ MALTEA    | ———— | SLOTH.    |
| “ DULCIATO  | ———— | LUXURY.   |
| “ GULIAR    | ———— | GLUTTONY. |

ACT II. SCENE 1. “ The Angels, to the number of fifteen, separately sing the grandeur of God, and his munificence to Man.

SCENE 2. “ Adam and Eve, with Lurcone and Gular watching unseen.—Adam and Eve express their devotion to God so fervently, that the evil Spirits, though invisible, are put to flight by their prayer.

SCENE 3. “ The Serpent, Satan, Spirits.—The Serpent, or Lucifer, announces his design of circumventing Woman.

SCENE 4. “ The Serpent, Spirits, and Volano.—Volano arrives from Hell, and declares that the confederate Powers of the abyss designed to send a goddess from the deep, entitled Vain Glory, to vanquish Man.

SCENE 5. “ Vain Glory, drawn by a giant, Volano, the Serpent, Satan, and Spirits.—The Serpent welcomes Vain Glory as his confederate, then hides himself in the tree to watch and tempt Eve.

SCENE 6. “ The Serpent and Vain Glory at first concealed ; the Serpent discovers himself to Eve, tempts and seduces her.—Vain Glory closes the Act with expressions of triumph.

ACT III. SCENE 1. “ Adam and Eve.—After a dialogue of tenderness she produces the fruit.—Adam expresses horror, but at last yields to her temptation.—When both have tasted the fruit, they are overwhelmed with remorse and terror : they fly to conceal themselves.



SCENE 2. “ Volano proclaims the Fall of Man, and invites the Powers of darkness to rejoice, and pay their homage to the Prince of Hell.

SCENE 3. “ Volano, Satan, chorus of Spirits, with ensigns of victory.—Expression of their joy.

SCENE 4. “ Serpent, Vain Glory, Satan, and Spirits.—The Serpent commands Canoro, a musical Spirit, to sing his triumph, which is celebrated with songs and dances in the 4th and 5th scenes; the latter closes with expressions of horror from the triumphant Demons, on the approach of God.

SCENE 6. “ God the Father, Angels, Adam and Eve.—God summons and rebukes the sinners, then leaves them, after pronouncing his malediction.

SCENE 7. “ An Angel, Adam and Eve.—The Angel gives them rough skins for clothing, and exhorts them to penitence.

SCENE 8. “ The Archangel Michael, Adam and Eve.—Michael drives them from Paradise with a scourge of fire. Angels close the Act with a chorus, exciting the offenders to hope in repentance.

ACT. IV. SCENE 1. “ Volano, chorus of fiery, airy, earthly, and aquatick Spirits.—They express their obedience to Lucifer.

SCENE 2. “ Lucifer rises, and utters his abhorrence of the light; the Demons console him—he questions them on the meaning of God’s words and conduct towards Man—He spurns their conjectures, and announces the incarnation, then proceeds to new machinations against Man.

SCENE 3. “ Infernal Cyclops, summoned by Lucifer, make a new world at his command,—He then commissions three Demons against Man, under the characters of the World, the Flesh, and Death.

SCENE 4. “ Adam alone.—He laments his fate, and at last feels his sufferings aggravated, in beholding Eve flying in terror from the hostile animals.



SCENE 5. "Adam and Eve.—She excites her companion to suicide.

SCENE 6. "Famine, Thirst, Lassitude, Despair, Adam and Eve.—Famine explains her own nature, and that of her associates.

SCENE 7. "Death, Adam and Eve.—Death reproaches Eve with the horrors she has occasioned—Adam closes the Act by exhorting Eve to take refuge in the mountains.

ACT V. SCENE 1. "The Flesh, in the shape of a woman; and Adam.—He resists her temptation.

SCENE 2. "Lucifer, the Flesh, and Adam.—Lucifer pretends to be a man, and the elder brother of Adam.

SCENE 3. "A Cherub, Adam, the Flesh, and Lucifer.—The Cherub secretly warns Adam against his foes; and at last defends him with manifest power.

SCENE 4. "The World, in the shape of a man, exulting in his own finery.

SCENE 5. "Eve and the World.—He calls forth a rich palace from the ground, and tempts Eve with splendour.

SCENE 6. "Chorus of Nymphs, Eve, the World, and Adam.—He exhorts Eve to resist these allurements—the World calls the Demons from Hell to enchain his victims—Eve prays for mercy: Adam encourages her.

SCENE 7. "Lucifer, Death, chorus of Demons.—They prepare to seize Adam and Eve.

SCENE 8. "The Archangel Michael, with a chorus of good Angels.—After a spirited altercation, Michael subdues and triumphs over Lucifer.

SCENE 9. "Adam, Eve, chorus of Angels.—They rejoice in the victory of Michael: he animates the offenders with a promise of favour from God, and future residence in Heaven:—they express their hope and gratitude.—The Angels close the drama, by singing the praise of the Redeemer."



When the reader compares the allegorical characters in this drama with those in Milton's sketches on similar subjects, intended once for tragedies, he will again see reason to admit that the *Adamo* had made considerable impression, either in representation or by perusal, on the mind of the English poet. See the Appendix, at the end of *Paradise Lost*, in the third volume of this edition.

Of Andreini, who has been contemptuously called a stroller, Mr. Hayley has vindicated the fame. "He had some tincture of classical learning, and considerable piety. He occasionally imitates Virgil, and quotes the Fathers." In one of the passages, cited from his *Adamo* by Mr. Hayley, Mr. Walker observes that <sup>h</sup> the course of a river is described with a richness of fancy, and a "dance of words," that prove Andreini to have been endowed with no common poetick powers. Of the *Adamo* there have been four editions, those of Milan in 1613, and 1617, printed in quarto; that of Perugia in 1641, printed in duodecimo; and that of Modena in 1685, printed in the same form. The edition of 1641 is considered the most rare. The description, to which Mr. Walker alludes, is beautifully amplified in that edition; and has been given in the Appendix to the *Historical Memoir*

<sup>h</sup> Hist. Memoir on Ital. Tragedy, p. 160.



on *Italian Tragedy*, 1799, p. xliv. Andreini was the son of the celebrated actresses, Isabella Andreini.<sup>i</sup> His various productions, says Mr. Hayley, “amount to the number of thirty; and form a singular medley of comedies and devout poems.” The writer of the article *Andreini* (*Isabelle*) in the *Nouveau Dict. Hist. à Caen*, 1786, adds, to the account of her son’s theatrical pieces, “On a encore d’Andreini trois *Traité*s en faveur de la Comédie & des Comédiens, publiés à Paris en 1625; ils sont fort rares.”

II. The next remark respecting the Origin of *Paradise Lost* is that of Dr. Pearce, who, in the Preface to his Review of the Text of the twelve books &c. published in 1733, says, “It is probable that Milton took the first hint of the Poem from an Italian tragedy, called *Il Paradiso Perso*; for I am informed that there is such an one extant, printed many years before Milton entered upon his design.” Mr. Hayley, in a very extensive research, has been able to discover no such performance. Nor have my inquiries been more successful.

<sup>i</sup> “Giovanni Battista Andreini, Fiorentino, o piuttosto Pistojese, fù figlio della celebre Comica Isabella Andreini (della quale si veda il Bayle, e il Mazzuchelli,) e nacque nel 1578. Dopo essersi acquistato molto credito sulle Scene Italiane porrossi in Francia, ove si meritò la stima di Luigi XIII. Visse per lo meno fino al 1652.” From the remarks mentioned in the Note c, p. 251.—It is not impossible, that Milton might have seen and conversed with Andreini, when he visited France and Italy.



III. We are next informed, in the Preface to the poetical works of the Rev. J. Sterling, printed at Dublin in 1734, that “The great Milton is said to have ingenuously confessed that he owed his immortal work of *Paradise Lost* to Mr. Fletcher’s *Locustæ*.” The person here mentioned is Phineas Fletcher, better known by his poem, entitled the *Purple Island*; and the *Locustæ* is a spirited Latin poem, written against the<sup>k</sup> Jesuits, and published at Cambridge, while Milton was a student there, in 1627; as was also the same author’s *Locusts, or Apollyonists*, an English poem, consisting of five cantos. That Milton had read both the Latin and English poem of Fletcher, I make no doubt. And I have accordingly offered, to the reader’s observation, some passages from both in the Notes on his poetical works, with which Milton appears to have been pleased. But Milton’s obligations to Fletcher are too confined to admit so extensive an acknowledgement, as that which is contained in Mr. Sterling’s Preface; and indeed the authority of the anecdote has not been given. Mr. Sterling has translated with

<sup>k</sup> The *Jesuits* were called *Locusts*, in the theological language of this period. See *Sundrie Sermons* by bishop Lake, fol. 1629, p. 205. “There is a kind of metaphoricall *Locusts* and Caterpillers, *Locusts* that came out of the bottomlesse pit; I meane Popish Priests and *Jesuits*; the Caterpillers of the Commonweale, Projectors and Inuentors of new tricks how to exhaust the purses of the subiects, couering private ends with publicke pretences.”



great spirit the speech of Lucifer to his Angels in the *Locustæ, vel Pietas Jesuitica*. See his poems, p. 43. As Fletcher's Latin poem is little known, it may be here proper to select, from this speech, the lines which seem to have influenced the imagination of Milton, and perhaps to have given rise to the preceding anecdote.

- " Nos contrà immemori per tuta silentia fomno
- " Sternimur interea, et, mediâ jam luce supini
- " Stertentes, festam trahimus, pia turba, quietem.
- " Quòd si animos sine honore acti sine fine laboris
- " Pœnitet, et proni imperii regnîque labantis
- " Nil miseret, positis flagris, odiisque remissis,
- " Oramus veniam, et dextras præbemus inermes.
- " Fors ille audacis facti, et justæ immemor iræ,
- " Placatus, facilisque manus et fœdera junget.
- " Fors solito lapsos (pœccati oblitus) honori
- " Restituet, cœlum nobis foliûmque relinquet.
- " At me nulla dies animi, cœptique prioris,
- " Diffimilem arguerit : quin nunc rescindere cœlum,
- " Et conjurato victricem milite pacem
- " Rumpere, ferventique juvat miscere tumultu.
- " Quò tanti cecidere animi ? Quò pristina virtus
- " Cessit, in æternam quâ mecum irrumpere lucem
- " Tentâstis, trepidûmque armis perfringere cœlum ?
- " Nunc verò indecores felicia ponitis arma,
- " Et toties victo imbelles conceditis hosti.
- " Per vos, per domitas cœlesti fulmine vires,
- " Indomitûmque odium, projecta resumite tela ;
- " Dum fas, dum breve tempus adest, accendite pugnas,
- " Restaurate acies, fractûmque reponite Martem.
- " Ni facitis, mox soli, et (quod magis urit) inulti,
- " Aeternûm (heu) vacuo flammis cruciabimur antro.
- " Ille quidem nullâ, heu, nullâ violabilis arte,
- " Securum sine fine tenet, sine milite regnum ;



- “ A nullo patitur, nullo violatur ab hoste :  
 “ Compatitur tamen, inque suis violabile membris  
 “ Corpus habet : nunc ô totis confurgite telis,  
 “ Quà patet ad vulnus nudum sine tegmine corpus,  
 “ Imprimite ultrices, penitusque recondite, flammæ.  
 “ Accelerat funesta dies, jam limine tempus  
 “ Insistit, cum nexa ipso cum vertice membra  
 “ Naturam induerint cœlestem, ubi gloria votum  
 “ Atque animum splendor superent, ubi gaudia damno  
 “ Crescant, deliciae que modum, finemque recusent.  
 “ At nos supplicio aeterno, Stygiisque catenis  
 “ Compressi, flammis et vivo sulphure tecti,  
 “ Perpetuas duro solvemus carcere poenas.  
 “ Hic anima, extremos jam tum perpeffa dolores,  
 “ Majores semper metuit, queriturque remotam,  
 “ Quam toto admittit præsentem pectore, mortem,  
 “ Oræque cæruleas perreptans flamma medullas  
 “ Torquet anhela fiti, fibræque atque ilia lambit.  
 “ Mors vivit, moriturque inter mala mille superstes  
 “ Vita, vicæque ipsâ cum morte, et nomina mutat.  
 “ Cum verò nullum moriendi conscia finem  
 “ Mens reputat, cum mille annis mille addidit annos,  
 “ Præteritumque nihil venturo detrahit ævum,  
 “ Mox etiam stellas, etiam superaddit arenas;  
 “ Pœna tamen damno crescit, per flagra, per ignes,  
 “ Per quicquid miserum est, præceps ruit, anxia lentam  
 “ Provocat infelix mortem ; si fortè relabi  
 “ Possit, et in nihilum rursus dispersa resolvi.  
 “ Aequemus meritis pœnas, atque ultima passis  
 “ Plura tamen magnis exactor debeat ausis ;  
 “ Tartareis mala speluncis, vindictæque cœlo  
 “ Deficiat ; nunquam, nunquam crudelis inultos,  
 “ Immeritosve, Erebus capiet : meruisse nefandum  
 “ Supplicium medios inter solabitur ignes,  
 “ Et, licet immensos, factis superâsse dolores.  
 “ Nunc agite, ô Proceres, omnesque effundite technas,  
 “ Consulite, imperioque alacres succurrite lapso.



“Dixerat, insequitur fremitus, trepidantiâque inter  
 “Agmina submissæ franguntur murmure voces.  
 “Qualis, ubi Oceano mox præcipitandus Ibero  
 “Immineat Phœbus, flavique ad litora Chami  
 “Convenient, glomerântque per auras agmina muscæ,  
 “Fit sonitus; longo crescentes ordine turbæ  
 “Buccinulis voces acuunt, fociósq̃ue vocantes,  
 “Vndas nube premunt; strepitu vicina rauco  
 “Completur, resonântque accensis litora bombis.”

The simile, which here follows this speech, resembles, in some degree, that of Milton in his poem on the fifth of November. See *In Quint. Nov.* ver. 176, &c. See also *Par. Lost*, B. i. 768. To which we might add the assembly of devils, summoned before Lucifer in the old French morality of *The Assumption*, 1527.

“Ung grand tas de dyables plus drus  
 “Que mouchérons en l’air volans —”

Milton’s Latin poem is dated at the age of seventeen, namely in 1625. Fletcher’s was published in 1627. The subjects of both are certainly similar. See the first Note on *In Quint. Nov.* vol. vi. p. 302. Fletcher, whose diction and imagery are often extremely beautiful, was educated at Eton, whence he was sent to King’s College, Cambridge, in 1600; became B. A. in 1604, and M. A. in 1608; was afterwards beneficed at Hilgay in Norfolk, and died in 1649.

IV. Hitherto what had been mentioned as hints, to which the active mind of Milton might not be insensible, had been mentioned without



betraying a wish to tear the laurels from the brow of the great poet. Not such was the intelligence conveyed to the publick by the malicious Lauder. He, unfortunate man, scrupled not to disgrace the considerable learning which he possessed, and to forfeit all pretensions to probity, by an audacious endeavour to prove that Milton was “the worst and greatest of all plagiaries.” He acquired, indeed, a temporary credit, and engaged a powerful advocate in his cause, by the speciousness of his charge. But he “played most foully for it.” He corrupted the text of those poets, whom he produced as evidences against the originality of Milton, by <sup>1</sup> interpolating several verses either of his own fabrication, or from the Latin translation of *Paradise Lost* by William Hog. His enmity to Milton first discovered itself, on Dr. Newton’s publishing his proposals for printing a new edition of the *Paradise Lost* with Notes of various Authors; which appeared in 1749. He affirmed that “he could prove,” says Dr. Newton, (giving an account of his interview with Lauder,) “that Milton had borrowed the substance of whole books together, and that there was scarcely a single thought or sentiment in his Poem which he had not stolen from some author or other, notwithstanding his vain pretence to

<sup>1</sup> These interpolations are given in the Appendix to this edition, No. II.



*things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.* And then, in confirmation of his charge he recited a long roll of Scotch, German, and Dutch poets, and affirmed that he had brought the books along with him which were his vouchers; and appealed particularly to Ramsay, a Scotch divine, and to Masenius, a German jesuit: But, upon producing his authors, he could not find Masenius; he had dropped the book somewhere or other in the way, and expressed much surprise and concern for the loss of it; Ramsay he left with me, and my opinion of Milton's imitations of that author I have given in a Note on B. ix. 513. I knew very well that Milton was an universal scholar, as famous for his great reading as for the extent of his genius; and I thought it not improbable, that Mr. Lauder, having the good fortune to meet with these German and Dutch poems, might have traced out there some of his imitations and illusions, which had escaped the researches of others: and it was my advice to him then, and as often as I had opportunities of seeing him afterwards, that if he had really made such notable discoveries as he boasted, he would do well to communicate them to the publick; an ingenious countryman of his had published an *Essay upon Milton's imitations of the Ancients*, and he would equally deserve the thanks of the learned world by writing an *Essay upon Milton's imitations of the Moderns*; but at the same time



I recommended to him a little more modesty and decency, and urged all the arguments I could to persuade him to treat Milton's name with more respect, and not to *write* of him with the same acrimony and rancour with which he *spoke* of him; it would weaken his cause instead of strengthening it, and would hurt himself more than Milton in the opinion of all candid readers. He began with publishing some specimens of his work in *The Gentleman's Magazine*: and I was sorry to find that he had no better regarded my advice in his manner of writing; for his papers were much in the same strain and spirit as his conversation; his assertions strong, and his proofs weak. However, to do him justice, several of the quotations which he had made from *Adamus Exul*, a tragedy of the famous Hugo Grotius, I thought so exactly parallel to several passages in the *Paradise Lost*, that I readily adopted them, and inserted them without scruple in my Notes; esteeming it no reproach to Milton, but rather a commendation of his taste and judgement, to have gathered so many of the choicest flowers in the gardens of others, and to have transplanted them with improvements into his own. At length, after I had published my first edition of the *Paradise Lost*, came forth Mr. Lauder's *Essay on Milton's use and imitation of the Moderns*: but except the quotations from Grotius, which I had already inserted in my first edition, I found in



Mr. Lauder's authors not above half a dozen passages, which I thought worth transferring into my second edition; not but he had produced more passages somewhat resembling others in Milton; but when a similitude of thought or expression, of sentiment or description, occurs in Scripture and we will say in Staphorstius, in Virgil and perhaps in Alexander Ross, in Ariosto and perhaps in Taubmannus, I should rather conclude that Milton had borrowed from the former whom he is certainly known to have read, than from the latter whom it is very uncertain whether he had ever read or not. We know that he had often drawn, and delighted to draw, from the pure fountain; and why then should we believe that he chose rather to drink of the stream after it was polluted by the trash and filth of others? We know that he had thoroughly studied, and was perfectly acquainted with, the graces and beauties of the great originals; and why then should we think that he was only the servile copier of perhaps a bad copy, which perhaps he had never seen?"

If Lauder had traced the marks of imitation in Milton with truth and candour; if he had modestly noted images or sentiments apparently transferred from other writers, yet still perhaps fortuitous coincidences; he would have gratified rational curiosity. But he was intent on blackening the fame of Milton. He published, besides his



Effay, “*Delectus Auctorum Sacrorum Miltono Facem Prælucentium*”<sup>m</sup>,” in two volumes; of which the first contained “<sup>n</sup> *Andrææ Ramfæi Poemata Sacra*,” & “<sup>o</sup> *Hugonis Grotii Adamus Exul, Tragoedia* :” the second, “<sup>p</sup> *Jacobi Masenii Sarcotidos Libri tres*,” — “<sup>q</sup> *Odorici Valmaranæ Dæmonomachia Liber unus*,” — “<sup>r</sup> *Casparis Barlæi Paradifus*,” — & “<sup>s</sup> *Frederici Taubmanni Bellum Angelicum: Libri tres*.” But, as Mr. Hayley finely observes, Milton “by the force and opulence of his own fancy was exempted from the inclination, and the necessity, of bor-

<sup>m</sup> In 1752, and 1753.

<sup>n</sup> From the Edinburg. edit. of 1633.

<sup>o</sup> From the edition of the Hague, 1601.

<sup>p</sup> From the edition of Cologne, 1644. The fourth and fifth books are printed in Barbou’s edition of the *Sarcotis*, printed at Paris, in 1781: to which are prefixed two Letters “*Aux RR. PP. Jesuites Auteurs des Memoires de Trevoux, Où l’on compare le PARADIS PERDU de Milton avec le Poème intitulé SARCOTIS de R. P. Jacques Masenius, Jésuite Allemand.*” The liberal writer of the Article, *Masenius*, in the *Nouveau Dict. Hist. à Caen*, 1785, considers the pretended obligations of Milton to Masenius too trifling to be mentioned.

<sup>q</sup> From the Vienna edit. 1627. See Dr. Newton’s Note on *Par. Lost*, B. v. 689.

<sup>r</sup> This is a translation from the *Paradise* of Catfius, originally written in Dutch. It is an epithalamium on the nuptials of Adam and Eve; and Mr. Hayley pronounces it to be spirited and graceful. Many of Catfius’s Dutch poems were translated into Latin verse à Caspare Barlæo, et Cornelio Boyo, and first published in their new dress at Dordrecht in 1643.

<sup>s</sup> This poem, consisting of two books, and a fragment of a third, Mr. Hayley says, was originally printed in 1604.



rowing and retailing the ideas of other poets ; but, rich as he was in his own proper fund, he chose to be perfectly acquainted not only with the wealth, but even with the poverty, of others.” Indeed I may venture to strengthen this observation by Milton’s own words, in which he seems to promise the production of some great poetical work. “ ‘ Neither do I think it shame to covenant with any knowing reader, that *for some few years yet* I may go on trust with him towards the payment of what I am now indebted, as being a work not to be rais’d from the heat of youth, or the vapours of wine ; like that which flows at waste from the pen of some vulgar amorist, or the trencher fury of some riming parasite ; nor to be obtain’d by the invocation of Dame Memory and her Siren Daughters, but by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit, who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his Seraphim, with the hallow’d fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases ; to this must be added *industrious and select reading*, steady observation, insight into all seemly and generous arts and affairs.” Mr. Hayley therefore may be justified in his opinion, that Milton read, in different languages, authors of every class ; “ and I doubt not,” he adds, “ but he had perused every poem collected by Lauder,

<sup>t</sup> Of Reformation, &c. B. ii. Prose-Works, vol. 1. p. 223. edit. 1698. This was first published in 1641.



though some of them hardly afford ground enough for a conjecture, that he remembered any passage they contain, in the course of his nobler composition."

V. We are next presented with the following information of a learned and ingenious traveller, well known to the literary world by his eminent services in the cause of Christianity. " " During my short stay at Dusseldorf, I became acquainted with a baron de Harold, an Irishman, who is colonel of the regiment of Koningsfeld, &c.— But my reason for mentioning the baron, was to inform you, that he is now employed in translating, into English verse, a Latin poem, entitled *The Christiad*, written by Robert Clarke, a Carthusian monk, of the convent of Nieuport near Ostend; from which he asserts that our great poet has borrowed largely. The poem, which is on the Passion of Christ, in seventeen books, contains, indeed, many ideas and descriptions, strikingly similar to those of Milton in his *Paradise Lost*. But, unless the baron can produce an edition previous to that which he possesses, which was printed at Bruges in 1678, it will be difficult to convict Milton of plagiarism in this instance; for Johnson, if I recollect

<sup>u</sup> Letters during the course of a tour through Germany in 1791 and 1792, by Robert Gray, M. A. published in 1794, pp. 19—21.



rightly, informs us, that Elwood saw a complete copy of the *Paradise Lost* at Milton's house, at Chalfont, in 1665; that Milton sold the copy in 1667, and that the third edition was printed in 1678, when it is probable that many copies had passed over to the continent, and contributed to encrease the reputation which his name had gained abroad; and therefore we have a right to suppose, that Clarke, and not Milton, was the copyist: The poem, however, appears to have much merit. The baron has finished ten or eleven books, with what fidelity I know not, but certainly with much animation. Milton has often been accused of plagiarism, it is to be feared sometimes with truth; for though bishop Douglas, with great acuteness, detected Lauder's interpolations in the works of different writers, which were designed to disparage Milton's reputation, he by no means undertook to prove, that Milton's claim to originality might not, in other instances, be impeached; and Lauder, though persuaded by Dr. Johnson to give up, in a hasty fit of shame, his whole Essay as an imposition, afterwards, in part, recanted his recantation, and attempted, with some success, to prove the charge of forgery against Milton. But it is time to put an end to this digression designed to vindicate Milton, as every Englishman must wish to do, where he can be vindicated without injury to truth."



To the latter part of this remark it will be proper to subjoin the words of bishop Douglas. "Grown desperate by his disappointment, this very man, [Lauder,] whom but a little before we have seen as abject in the confession of his forgeries, as he had been bold in the contrivance of them, with an inconstitence, equalled only by his impudence, renewed his attack upon the author of the *Paradise Lost*; and in a <sup>w</sup> pamphlet, published for that purpose, acquainted the world, that the true reason which had excited him to contrive his forgery was, because Milton had attacked the character of Charles the first, by interpolating Pamela's prayer from the *Arcadia*, in an edition of the *Eicon Basilike*; hoping, no doubt, by this curious key to his conduct, to be received into favour, if not by the friends of truth, at least by the idolaters of the royal martyr: the zeal of this wild party-man against Milton having at the same time extended itself against his biographer, the very learned Dr. Birch, for no other reason but because he was

<sup>w</sup> Entitled, "King Charles I. Vindicated from the charge of plagiarism, brought against him by Milton, and Milton himself convicted of forgery, and a gross imposition on the publick." Not content with this title; he begins the two first pages with all the consequence of a keeper of wild beasts, when he exhibits *a more celebrated monster than usual*; "*The Grand Impostor detected!*"



so candid as to express his disbelief of a tradition unsupported by evidence."

I have been unable to discover whether there is any edition of Clarke's book, prior to that which is mentioned.

VI. We are now to be again gratified with the very curious researches, and ingenious deductions, of Mr. Hayley. Having observed it to be highly probable, that Andreini turned the thoughts of Milton from Alfred to Adam, as the subject of a *dramatick* composition, he thinks it possible that an Italian writer, less known than Andreini, first threw into the mind of Milton the idea of converting Adam into an *epick* personage. \* "I have now before me," he proceeds, "a literary curiosity, which my accomplished friend, Mr. Walker, to whom the literature of Ireland has many obligations, very kindly sent me, on his return from an excursion to Italy, where it happened to strike a traveller, whose mind is peculiarly awakened to elegant pursuits. The book I am speaking of is entitled *La Scena Tragica d'Adamo ed Eva, Estratta dalli primi tre capi della Sacra Genesi, e ridotta a significato Morale da Troilo Lancetta, Benacense*. Venetia 1644. This little work is dedicated to Maria

\* Conjectures on the Origin of Paradise Lost, at the end of the Life of Milton, 2d edit. 1796, p. 264, &c.



Gonzaga, Dutchess of Mantua, and is nothing more than a drama in prose, of the ancient form, entitled a morality, on the expulsion of our first parents from Paradise. The author does not mention Andreini, nor has he any mixture of verse in his composition; but, in his address to the reader, he has the following very remarkable passage: after suggesting that the Mosaick history of Adam and Eve is purely allegorical, and designed as an incentive to virtue, he says,

‘ Una notte sognai, che Moisè mi porse gratiosa esposizione, e misterioso significato con parole tali apunto :

‘ Dio fa parte all’ Huom di se stesso con l’ intervento della ragione, e dispone con infallibile sentenza, che signoreggiando in lui la medesima sopra le sensuali voglie, preservato il pomo del proprio core dalli appetiti disordinati, per guiderdone di giusta obbedienza li trasforma il mondo in Paradiso.—Di questo s’io parlassi, al sicuro formarei heroico poema convenevole a semidei.”

‘ One night I dreamt that Moses explained to me the mystery, almost in these words :

‘ God reveals himself to Man by the intervention of reason, and thus infallibly ordains that reason, while she supports her sovereignty over the sensual inclinations in Man, and preserves the apple of his heart from licentious appetites, in reward of his just obedience transforms the world into Paradise.—Of this were I to speak, assuredly I might form an heroick poem worthy of demi-gods.’

“ It strikes me as possible that these last words, assigned to Moses in his vision by Troilo Lancetta, might operate on the mind of Milton like the question of Ellwood, and prove, in his pro-



lifick fancy, a kind of rich graft on the idea he derived from Andreini, and the germ of his greatest production.

“ A sceptical critick, inclined to discountenance this conjecture, might indeed observe, it is more probable that Milton never saw a little volume not published until after his return from Italy, and written by an author so obscure, that his name does not occur in Tiraboschi's elaborate history of Italian literature ; nor in the patient Italian chronicler of poets, Quadrio, though he bestows a chapter on early dramatick compositions in prose. But the mind, that has once started a conjecture of this nature, must be weak indeed, if it cannot produce new shadows of argument in aid of a favourite hypothesis. Let me therefore be allowed to advance, as a presumptive proof of Milton's having seen the work of Lancetta, that he makes *a similar use of Moses*, and introduces him to speak a prologue in the sketch of his various plans for an allegorical drama. It is indeed possible that Milton might never see the performances either of Lancetta or Andreini ; yet conjecture has ground enough to conclude very fairly, that he was acquainted with both ; for Andreini wrote a long allegorical drama on Paradise, and we know that the fancy of Milton first began to play with the subject according to that peculiar form of composition.



Lancetta treated it also in the shape of a dramatick allegory ; but said, at the same time, under the character of Moses, that the subject might form an incomparable epick poem ; and Milton, quitting his own hasty sketches of allegorical dramas, accomplished a work which answers to that intimation."

The following Analysis of this drama has been made by Mr. Hayley.

ACT I. SCENE I. "GOD commemorates his creation of the heavens, the earth, and the water—determines to make Man—gives him vital spirit, and admonishes him to revere his Maker, and live innocent.

SCENE II. "RAPHAEL, MICHAEL, GABRIEL, and ANGELS. Raphael praises the works of God—the other Angels follow his example, particularly in regard to Man.

SCENE III. "GOD and ADAM. God gives Paradise to Adam to hold as a fief—forbids him to touch the apple—Adam promises obedience.

SCENE IV. "ADAM. Acknowledges the beneficence of God, and retires to repose in the shade.

ACT II. SCENE I. "GOD and ADAM. GOD resolves to form a companion for Adam, and does so while Adam is sleeping—he then awakes Adam, and, presenting to him his new associate, blesses them both ; then leaves them, recommending obedience to his commands.

SCENE II. "ADAM and EVE. Adam receives Eve as his wife—praises her, and entreats her to join with him in revering and obeying God—she promises submission to his will, and intreats his instruction—he tells her the prohibition, and enlarges on the beauties of Paradise—on his speaking of flocks, she desires to see them, and he departs to show her the various animals.



SCENE III. "LUCIFER, BELIAL, SATAN. Lucifer laments his expulsion from heaven, and meditates revenge against Man—the other Demons relate the cause of their expulsion, and stimulate Lucifer to the revenge he meditates—he resolves to employ the Serpent.

SCENE IV. "The SERPENT, EVE, LUCIFER. The Serpent questions Eve—derides her fear and her obedience—tempts her to taste the apple—she expresses her eagerness to do so—the Serpent exults in the prospect of her perdition—Lucifer (who seems to remain as a separate person from the Serpent) expresses also his exultation, and steps aside to listen to a dialogue between Adam and Eve.

SCENE V. "EVE, ADAM. Eve declares her resolution to taste the apple, and present it to her husband—she tastes it, and expresses unusual hope and animation—she says the Serpent has not deceived her—she feels no sign of death, and presents the fruit to her husband—he reproves her—she persists in pressing him to eat—he complies—declares the fruit sweet, but begins to tremble at his own nakedness—he repents, and expresses his remorse and terror—Eve proposes to form a covering of leaves—they retire to hide themselves in foliage.

ACT III. "SCENE I. LUCIFER, BELIAL, SATAN. LUCIFER exults in his success, and the other Demons applaud him.

SCENE II. "RAPHAEL, MICHAEL, GABRIEL. These good Spirits lament the fall, and retire with awe on the appearance of God.

SCENE III. "GOD, EVE, ADAM. God calls on Adam—he appears and laments his nakedness—God interrogates him concerning the tree—he confesses his offence, and accuses Eve—she blames the Serpent—God pronounces his malediction, and sends them from his presence.

SCENE IV. "RAPHAEL, EVE, and ADAM. Raphael bids them depart from Paradise—Adam laments his destiny—Raphael persists in driving them rather harshly from the garden—Adam begs that his innocent children may not suffer for



the fault of their mother—Raphael replies, that not only his children, but all his race, must suffer ; and continues to drive them from the garden—Adam obeys—Eve laments, but soon comforts Adam—he at length departs, animating himself with the idea, that to an intrepid heart every region is a home.

SCENE V. “A CHERUB, moralizing on the creation and fall of Adam, concludes the third and last Act.”

Mr. Walker, in his *Historical Memoir on Italian Tragedy*, has enlarged this analysis with some specimens of the author's style and manner, together with a <sup>y</sup> fac simile of the quaint table exhibiting the “*morale esposazione*” of the work. From the same ingenious and entertaining volume we learn that, “as <sup>z</sup> Lancetta denominates himself Benacense, it is presumed he was a native of that part of the riviera of Salò, on the lago di Garda, which is called Tosolano, and whose inhabitants are styled Benacenses, from Benacus, the ancient name of the lake. He was, he modestly declares, neither a poet, nor an orator,—‘poeta non son’ io, ne oratore,’—but I am willing to believe he was a good man, and that it was rather his virtues than his talents which recommended him to the accomplished family of Gonzaga, of which he seems to have been a protégé. Such is the deep obscurity in which this author is buried, that the most se-

<sup>y</sup> Hist. Mem. Appendix, p. xlvi—lvi.

<sup>z</sup> Hist. Mem. p. 172.



dulous inquiry has not led to the discovery of any authentick notices concerning him. His drama is slightly mentioned by Allacci, who supposes it to be his only production."

Mr. Hayley adds, to his remarks on the dramas of Andreini and Lancetta, that Milton was probably familiar with an Italian poem, little known in England, and formed expressly on the conflict of the apostate Spirits; the *Angeleida del Sig. Erasmo di Valvasone*, Venet. 1590. Dr. Warton was of the same opinion. See the Note on *Par. Lost*, B. v. 689. And Mr. Hayley has cited the verses, in which the Italian poet assigns to the Infernal Powers the invention of artillery. With this poem, I think, the mind of Milton could not but be affected. It begins :

" Io canterò del ciel l' antica guerra,  
 " Per cui sola il principio, et l' uso nacque,  
 " Onde tra il seme human non pur in terra,  
 " Ma fouente si pugna anchor sù l' acque :  
 " Carcere eterno nel abisso ferra  
 " Quel che ne fù l' authore, & vinto giacque :  
 " E i vincitori in parte eccelsa, & alma  
 " Godon trionfo eterno, eterna palma."

Valvasone's description of the triumphant Angels in B. iii. is particularly interesting. The poem concludes with an animated Sonnet to the Archangel Michael, preceded by the four following lines :



“ Così disse Michele, & da le pure  
 “ Ciglia di Dio refulfe un chiaro lampo,  
 “ Che gli die fegno del diuino affenfo,  
 “ E tutto il Ciel fù pien di gaudio immenfo.”

*All' Arcangelo Michele.*

“ Eccelfo Heroe, Champion inuito, & Santo  
 “ De l' imperio diuin, per cui pigliafti  
 “ L' alta contefa, e 'l reo Dragon cacciafti  
 “ Da l' auree ftelle debellato, & franto ;  
 “ Et hor non men giù ne l' eterno pianto,  
 “ Onde ei riforger mal s' attenta, i vaffi  
 “ Orgogli fuoi reprimi, & gli contrafti,  
 “ A noftro fchermo con continuo vanto ;  
 “ Quefti miei noui accenti, onde traluce  
 “ La gran tua gloria, e 'l mio deuoto affetto,  
 “ Accogli tu fin da l' empirea luce :  
 “ Sieno in vece di preghi, & al cospetto  
 “ Gli porta poi del fempiterno Duce,  
 “ Che di fua gratia adempia il mio difetto.”

Mr. Hayley feems to think alfo, that Milton may be fometimes traced in the *Strage de gli Innocenti* of Marino. The late Mr. Bowle appears to have entertained a fimilar notion. See alfo Mr. Warton's Note *In Mansum*, ver. 11. A few paffages are accordingly cited, from this poem, in the Notes on *Paradife Loft*. It was firft publifhed at Venice in 1633 ; and confifts of four books : 1. “ Sospetto d'Herode : 2. Configlio de Satrapi : 3. Effecutione della Strage : 4. Il Limbo.” Milton has been <sup>a</sup> thought in-

<sup>a</sup> Biogr. Brit. edit. Kippis, vol. iv. p. 431.



debted likewise to Crashaw, the translator of the first of these books. I will select a few passages, therefore, from this version, which seem to have afforded some countenance to the opinion. *Sospetto d'Herode*, stanza, 5. Description of Satan, Crashaw's Poems, edit. 1648, p. 59.

- “ His eyes, the fullen dens of death and night,
- “ Startle the dull ayre with a dismall red :
- “ Such his fell glances as the fatall light
- “ Of staring comets, that looke kingdoms dead.—
- “ He shooke himselfe, and spread his spatious wings ;
- “ Which, like two bosom'd sailes, embrace the dimme
- “ Aire, with a dismall shade ; but all in vaine ;
- “ Of sturdy adamant is his strong chaine.”

Part of his speech : st. 28.

- “ And should we Powers of Heaven, Spirits of worth,
- “ Bow our bright heads before a king of clay ?
- “ It shall not be, said I, and clombe the North,
- “ Where never wing of Angell yet made way.
- “ What though I mist my blow ? yet I strooke high ;
- “ And, to dare something, is some victory.—

31.

- “ Ah wretch ! what bootes thee to cast back thy eyes,
- “ Where dawning hope no beame of comfort shoves ?
- “ While the reflection of thy forepast joys,
- “ Renders thee double to thy present woes ;
- “ Rather make up to thy new miseries,
- “ And meete the mischief that upon thee growes.
- “ If Hell must mourne, Heaven sure shall sympathize ;
- “ What force cannot effect, fraud shall devise.



32.

“ And yet whose force feare I? have I so lost  
 “ Myselfe? my strength too with my innocence?  
 “ Come, try who dares, Heaven, Earth; whate’er dost  
 “ boast  
 “ A borrowed being, make thy bold defence:  
 “ Come thy Creator too; what though it cost  
 “ Me yet a second fall? we’d try our strengths.  
 “ Heaven saw us struggle once; as brave a fight  
 “ Earth now should see, and tremble at the fight.

33.

“ Thus spoke the impatient Prince, and made a pause:  
 “ His foule hags rais’d their heads, and clapt their hands;  
 “ And all the Powers of Hell, in full applause,  
 “ Flourisht their snakes, and tost their flaming brands.  
 “ We, said the horrid sisters, wait thy lawes,  
 “ The obsequious handmaids of thy high commands:  
 “ Be it thy part, Hell’s mighty Lord, to lay  
 “ On us thy dread commands; ours to obey.

34.

“ What thy Alecō, what these hands, can doe,  
 “ Thou mad’st bold prooffe upon the brow of Heaven;  
 “ Nor should’st thou bate in pride, because that now  
 “ To these thy footy kingdoms thou art driven.  
 “ Let Heaven’s Lord chide above, lowder than thou,  
 “ In language of his thunder; thou art even  
 “ With him below: Here thou art Lord alone  
 “ Boundlesse and absolute: Hell is thine owne.”

That Crashaw and Milton should concur in similar sentiments and expressions, when Marino dictates to both, can be a matter of little surprise. But, when we compare the passages in



Milton which may be considered as harmonizing with these in Crashaw, we shall not hesitate to declare that, in bold and glowing phraseology, as well as in beautiful and expressive numbers, the palm, due to the improvement of the original, belongs to the former. Nor shall we forget the hints from Æschylus and Dante, which Milton finely interweaves in the character of his Prince of darkness. Milton, no doubt, had read Crashaw's translation; as he had read the translations also of Ariosto and Tasso by Harington and Fairfax; to various passages in which he has, in like manner, added new graces resulting from his own imagination and judgement. There are also a few resemblances in Crashaw's poetry to passages in Milton, which I have noticed in their respective places. Crashaw, I may add, is entitled to the merit of suggesting the combination and form of several happy phrases to Pope. Of a poet, thus distinguished, I take this opportunity to subjoin a few particulars from the unpublished manuscript of his fellow-collegian, Dr. John Bargrave. “<sup>b</sup> When I went first of my 4 times to Rome, there were there 4 revolvers to the Roman Church, that had binn

<sup>b</sup> After the restoration of Charles II. Dr. Bargrave became Prebendary of Canterbury, to the Library of which Cathedral he gave many books and other curiosities. See a further account of this MS. in the Note on Christina, queen of Sweden, vol. vi. p. 270.



fellowes of Peterhouse in Cambridge with my felfe. The name of one of them was Mr. R. Crashaw, whoe was of the Seguita (as their tearme is), that is, an attendant, or one of the followers of Cardinall Palotta, for which he had a salary of crownes by the month, (as the custome is,) but no dyet. Mr. Crashaw infinitely commended his Cardinall, but complayned extreamely of the wickedness of those of his retinue, of which he, having his Cardinall's eare, complayned to him; vpon which the Italians fell so farr owt with him, that the Cardinall, to secure his life, was faine to putt him from his service; and, procuring him some smale imploy at the Lady's of Loretto, whither he went in pilgrimage in summer time, and ouerheating him felfe dyed in few weeks after he came thither; and it was doubtfull whether he were not poysoned."—

Mr. Hayley notices the existence also of the following pieces relating to Milton's subject:

- i. *Adamo Caduto*, tragedia sacra, di Serafino della Sallandra. Cozenzo, 1647. 8vo.
- ii. *La Battaglia Celeste tra Michele e Lucifero*, di Antonio Alfani, Palermitano. Palermo, 1568. 4to.
- iii. *Dell' Adamo* di Giovanni Soranzo, Genova, 1604. 12mo.

They had, however, escaped the researches of Mr. Hayley. Signor Signorelli, the learned and elegant correspondent of Mr. Walker on subjects



connected with his *Memoir on Italian Tragedy*, published in 1799, had not then seen them. Whether Milton had perused them, must therefore be a matter of future inquiry. Mr. Walker, to whom the reader is indebted for the curious Note on the dialogue between Satan and Michael, *Par. Lost*, B. vi. 292 &c, observes that all the commentators pass over the obligations of Milton to the *Gerusalemme Distrutta* of Marino. From the seventh canto, which is <sup>a</sup> all that is printed, and which is subjoined to two small editions of the *Strage de gli Innocenti* in his possession, Mr. Walker has made a few extracts; and I have cited those relating to the compassionate countenance of Christ, and to the glorious description of God, in the Notes on B. iii. 140, 380. See also the Note on B. xi. 406.

Mr. Hayley further notices the probable attention of Milton to Tasso's *Le Sette Giornate del Mondo Creato*. See likewise Dr. Warton's Note on *Par. Lost*, B. v. 689. Tasso, like Milton, follows indeed almost the very words of

<sup>c</sup> See the Hist. Mem. Appendix, p. xxxiii.

<sup>d</sup> Ibid. p. xxxvi.

<sup>e</sup> Dr. Warton mentions only the edition of Viterbo, in 1607. There had been an earlier edition thus entitled, "*I due primi Giorni del Mondo Creato, Poesia sacra.*" Venet. 1600, 4to. And a later, "*Le sette Giornate &c. Ult. impress. ricorretta.*" Venet. 1637.



Scripture, in relating the commands of God on the several days of the Creation. The poem is in blank verse. I submit to the reader the following pious addrefs :

- “ Dimmi, qual opra alhora, ò qual riposo  
 “ Fosse ne la Diuina, e Sacra Mente  
 “ In quel d’ eternita felice stato.  
 “ E ’n qual ignota parte, e ’n quale idea  
 “ Era l’ effempio tuo, Celeste Fabro,  
 “ Quando facesti à te la Reggia, e ’l Tempio.  
 “ Tu, che ’l fai, tu ’l riuela : e chiare, e conte  
 “ Signor, per me fà l’ opre, i modi, e l’ arti.  
 “ Signor, tu se’ la mano, io son la cetra,  
 “ La qual mossa da te, con dolci tempre  
 “ Di foaue armonia, risuona ; e molce  
 “ D’ adamantino smalto i duri affetti.  
 “ Signor, tu se’ lo spirto io roca tromba,  
 “ Son per me stesso à la tua gloria ; e langue,  
 “ Se non m’ ispiri tu, la voce, e ’l suono.”

In the preceding verses Milton’s addrefs to the Holy Spirit, “ Instruct me, for thou know’st,” is perhaps observable. They close also with a similar sentiment to his invocation of the same assistance in his *Paradise Regained*, B. i. 11.

- “ Thou Spirit, ————— inspire,  
 “ As thou art wont, my prompted song, else mute.”

VII. The latest observation respecting the origin of *Paradise Lost*, which has been submitted to the publick, is contained in Mr. Dunster’s “ Considerations on Milton’s early reading,



and the *prima stamina* of *Paradise Lost*," 1800. The object of these "Considerations" is to prove that Milton became, at a very early period of his life, enamoured of Joshua Sylvester's translation of the French poet, Du Bartas. Lauder had asserted long since that Milton was indebted to Sylvester's translation for "numberless fine thoughts, besides his low trick of playing upon words, and his frequent use of technical terms. From him," he adds, "Milton has borrowed many elegant phrases, and single words, which were thought to be peculiar to him, or rather coined by him; such as *palpable darkness*, and a thousand others." Lauder has also said, that Philips, Milton's nephew, "every where, in his *Theatrum Poetarum*, either wholly passes over in silence such authors as Milton was most obliged to, or, if he chanced to mention them, does it in the most slight and superficial manner imaginable: *Du Bartas* alone excepted." But *Sylvester* is also highly commended, in this work, for his translation. Mr. Hayley well observes, in apology, for other omissions of Philips, "which are too frequent to be considered as accidental, that he probably chose not to enumerate various poems relating to Angels, to Adam, and to Paradise, lest ignorance and malice should absurdly consider the mere existence of such poetry as a derogation from the glory of Milton."



Lauder adds, that there is “a commentary on this work, called *A Summary of Du Bartas*, a book full of prodigious learning, and many curious observations on all arts and sciences; from whence Milton has derived a multiplicity of fine hints, scattered up and down his poem, especially in philosophy and theology.” This book was printed in folio, in 1621; and is recommended, in the title-page, as “fitt for the learned to refresh their memories, and for younger students to abbreviate and further their studies.” From this pretended garden of sweets I can collect no nosegay. It cannot indeed be supposed that Milton, when he wrote the *Paradise Lost*, was so imperfectly acquainted with the purer sources of knowledge, as to be indebted to such a volume.

That Milton, however, had read the translation of *Du Bartas*, has been admitted by his warmest admirers, Dr. Farmer, Mr. Bowle, Mr. Warton, and Mr. Headley. A slight remark, which the editor of these volumes long since ventured to make, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, respecting Milton's acquaintance with the poetry of Sylvester, attracted the notice of the author of the *Considerations* &c. just mentioned;

<sup>f</sup> See November 1796, p. 900. See also Mr. Dunster's *Considerations* &c. p. 3. I take this opportunity of adding that Dr. Farmer's remark occurs in a Note on the “*married calm of states*,” in *Troilus and Cressida*. See Steevens's *Shakspeare*, edit. 1793. vol. xi. p. 254.



and appears to have stimulated his desire to know more of the forgotten bard. Mr. Dunster, therefore, having procured an edition of Sylvester's *Du Bartas*, drew up his ingenious volume; and, with no less elegance of language than liberality of opinion, pointed out the taste and judgement of Milton in availing himself of particular passages in that book. With honourable affection for the fame of Milton, he observes, that "nothing can be further from my intention than to insinuate that Milton was a plagiarist or servile imitator; but I conceive that, having read these sacred poems of very high merit, at the immediate age when his own mind was just beginning to teem with poetry, he retained numberless thoughts, passages, and expressions therein, so deeply in his mind, that they hung inherently on his imagination, and became as it were naturalized there. Hence many of them were afterwards insensibly transfused into his own compositions." Sylvester's *Du Bartas* was also a popular book when Milton began to write poetry; it was published in the very street in which Milton's father then lived; Sylvester was certainly, as was probably<sup>8</sup> Humphry Lownes the

<sup>8</sup> I may observe that the folio edition of Spenser's *Faery Queen*, and of his other poems, in 1611, came from the press of *Humphry Lownes*; the date at the end of the *Faery Queen* is, however, 1612.

In 1611 also *Humphry Lownes* printed the second edition of the little volume, from which I shall presently have occasion to make an extract or two, entitled "Stafford's Niobe: or his age



printer of the book, puritanically inclined; Milton's family, professing the same religious opinions, would powerfully recommend to the young student the perusal of this work: By such inferences, added to the preceding remark, the reader is led to acknowledge the successful manner, in which Mr. Dunster has accomplished his design; namely, to show Milton's "early acquaintance with, and predilection for, Sylvester's *Du Bartas*." I am persuaded, however, that Milton must have sometimes closed the volume with extreme disgust; and that he then sought gratification in the strains of his kindred poets, of Spenser, and of Shakspeare; or of those, whose style was not barbarous like Sylvester's, the enticing Drummond, the learned and affecting Drayton, and several other bards of that period; as may be gathered from expressions even in <sup>h</sup> his earliest performances. But, to resume Mr. Dunster's observation respecting the Origin of *Paradise Lost*: Sylvester's *Du Bartas* "contains, indeed, more material *prima stamina* of the *Paradise Lost*, than, as I believe, any other book whatever: and *my hypothesis* is, that it positively *laid the first stone* of that 'monumentum ære perennius.' That Arthur for a

of teares. A Treatise no lesse profitable and comfortable then the times damnable, &c." 12mo.

<sup>h</sup> See the Notes on his Translations of the 114th and 136th Psalms.



time predominated in Milton's mind over his, at length preferred, sacred subject, was probably owing to the advice of Manso, and the track of reading into which he had then got. How far the *Adamo* of Andreini, or the *Scena Tragica d'Adamo et Eva* of Lancetta, as pointed out by Mr. Hayley; or any of the Italian poems on such subjects, noticed by Mr. Walker; contributed to revive his predilection for sacred poetry, it is beside my purpose to inquire. If he was materially *caught* by any of these, it served, I conceive, only to renew a *primary impression* made on his mind by Sylvester's *Du Bartas*: although the Italian dramas might induce him then to *meditate* his divine Poem in a *dramatick* form. It is, indeed, justly observed by Mr. Warton, on the very fine passage, ver. 33. of the *Vacation Exercise*, written when Milton was only nineteen, 'that it contains strong indications of a young mind anticipating the subject of *Paradise Lost*.'—Cowley found himself to be a poet, or, as he himself tells us, 'was made one,' by the delight he took in Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, 'which was wont to lay in his mother's apartment;' and which he had read all over, before he was twelve years old. That Dryden was, in some degree, similarly indebted to Cowley, we may collect from his denominating him 'the darling of my youth, the famous Cowley.' Pope, at a little more than eight years of age, was initiated in



poetry by the perusal of Ogilby's Homer and Sandys's Ovid ; and to the latter he has himself intimated obligations, where he declares, in his Notes to the *Iliad*, ' that English poetry owes much of its present beauty to the translations of Sandys.' The *rudimenta poetica* of our great poet I suppose similarly to have been Sylvester's *Du Bartas* ; which, I conceive, not only elicited the first sparks of poetick fire from the pubescent genius of Milton, but induced him, from that time, to devote himself principally to sacred poesy, and to select *Urania* for his immediate Muse,

————— ' magno perculsus amore.' ”

While I agree with Mr. Dunster, that Milton has adopted several thoughts and expressions from Sylvester, I hope I may be permitted to observe that, although the poem of *Du Bartas* treats largely of the Creation of the World and the Fall of Man, the *Origin of Paradise Lost* may not perhaps be absolutely attributed to that work. “ Smit with the love of sacred song,” Milton, I apprehend, might be influenced, in his “ *long choosing and beginning late*,” by other effusions of sacred poesy, in the language which he loved, and in the epick form, on similar subjects ; besides those of Dante, of Tasso, and of the Italian poets already mentioned. In the following list the Muses of Spain and Portugal also will be found to have chosen congenial themes.



i. Discorso in versi della Creazione del Mondo fino alla Venuta di Gesù Cristo, per Antonio Cornazono. 4°. 1472.

ii. Della Creatione del Mondo, Poema Sacro, del Sig. Gasparo Mvrtola. Giorne sette, Canti sedici. 12<sup>mo</sup>. Venet. 1608.

iii. Epamerone, overo l' opera de sei Giorni, Poema di Don Felice Passero. 12<sup>mo</sup>. Venet. 1609.

iv. Creacion del Mundo, Poema Espagnol, por el Doctor Alonzo de Azevedo. 8<sup>vo</sup>. en Roma, 1615.

v. Da Creação et Complicação do Homem, Cantos tres por Luis de Camoens, em Verso Portugues. 4°. em Lisboa 1615. Rimas 2<sup>da</sup>. Parte.—Paris, 12<sup>mo</sup>. 1759.

The first of these poems is noticed by Baretti in his *Italian Library*, p. 58 ; who also mentions an epick poem, first printed in Sicily, and since at Milan, of which he had forgot the dates, entitled “ *L' Adamo del Campailla*. It is a philosophical poem, much admired by the followers of the Cartesian system, who were very numerous when the author wrote it.” Ib. p. 66. Baretti also mentions another epick poem “ *Le sei Giornate*, di Sebastiano Erizzo. *The six Days*, that is, the Creation performed in six days, &c.” Ib. p. 64. But this is a mistake. *Le sei Giornate* of Erizzo is neither a poem, nor at all connected with the history of the Creation. It is a series of novels: “ *Le sei giornate, nelle quali sotto diuersi fortunati & infelici auenimenti, da sei giouani raccontati, si contengono ammaestramenti nobili & utili di morale Filosofia* <sup>1</sup>.”

<sup>1</sup> Proemio. p. 1.—This work of Sebastian Erizzo was printed at Venice, in quarto, by Giouan Varisco &c. in 1567.



The second of the before-mentioned poems is in my possession ; and I have given some account of it in the Notes on B. iv. 753, and B. v. 689 of *Paradise Lost*.

The three next are mentioned by Mr. Bowle, together with the preceding poem ; as also with the *Adamos* of Andreini, Soranzo, and Serafino della Salandra, and with the *Angeleida* of Valvasone ; in his <sup>k</sup> manuscript Notes on Lauder's Essay. He has added a reference to the following work, which might not be unknown to Milton.

vi. Il Caso di Lucifero, di Amico Aguilfo. Crescimbeni, 4. 126.

To which may be subjoined another poem that might have attracted the great poet's notice, as it is pronounced by Baretti to be little inferior to Dante himself.

vii. Il Quadriregio, sopra i regni d' Amore, di Satanasso, dei vizi, e delle virtu, di Mons. F. Frezzi Vescovo di Foligno. fol. Perug. 1481.

I may venture also to point out

viii. La Vita & Passione di Christo, &c. composta per Antonio Cornozano, in terza rima. Venet. 1518. 12<sup>mo</sup>.

In which the second chapter of the first book is entitled “ De la creatione del mondo.”

ix. La Humanita del Figliuolo di Dio, in ottava rima, per Theofilo Folengo, Mantovano. Venegia. 1533. 4<sup>o</sup>.

In ten books : in the second of which Adam and

<sup>k</sup> Now the property of Richard Gough, Esq; to whom I am much indebted for the use of the book.



Eve are particularly noticed. Dr. Burney has considered the sacred drama of *Il Gran Natale di Christo* by the elder Cicognini, as subservient to Milton's plan. See the Note on *Par. Lost*, B. x. 249. There is also a poem of <sup>1</sup> P. Antonio Glielmo, Milton's contemporary, entitled *Il Diluvio del Mondo*; and there are the *Mondo Desolato* of the "shepherd-boy," G. D. Peri, (the author also of the epick poem, *Fiesole Distrutta*,) and the *Giudicio Estremo* of Toldo Costantini; both published <sup>m</sup> before Milton perhaps had determined the subject of his song. The writer of the article *Pona* (*François*) in the *Nouveau Dict. Hist.* à Caen, edit. 1786, says that Pona published "*L'Adamo, poema, 1664.*" The *Adamo* by this writer, (of which I am possessed,) is not, however, a poem, although abounding with poetical expressions, but a history, in three books, of the Creation and of our first parents. I have made extracts from it in the Notes on *Par. Lost*, B. ix. 704, 897, &c. Pona was an author not a little admired in Italy: he died in 1652. Loredano, in a letter to him, says "<sup>n</sup> L'ingegno di V. S. è un giardino di Paradiso, ove non nascono che fiori immortali. Tale hò riconosciuto l'an-

<sup>1</sup> He died in 1644. See *Elogii d' Huomini Letterati*, scritti da Lorenzo Craffo, parte sec. Venet, 1666. p. 287.

<sup>m</sup> The former in 1637; and I believe there is an earlier edition: the latter in 1648.

<sup>n</sup> *Lettres de Loredano*, edit. Bruxelles, 1708. p. 88.



gelico." Loredano himself has also written an Italian Life of *Adam*; which is mentioned in the Notes on *Par. Lost*, B. ix. 529, 1009. It is probable that Pona and Loredano were acquainted with Milton; that they were among those discerning persons, who, "in the private academies of Italy, whither," the poet tells us, "° he was favoured to resort," fostered his blooming genius by their approbation and encouragement. Loredano was the founder of the Accademia degli Incogniti. His house at Venice was the constant resort of learned men. Gaddi, an Italian friend whom Milton names, and who has <sup>p</sup> celebrated the foundation of the academy, would hardly fail to introduce the young Englishman to the founder of it, if by no other means he had become known to him.

Italy, then, may perhaps be thought to have confirmed, if not to have excited, the design of Milton to sing "Man's disobedience, and the mortal taste of the forbidden fruit."

Mr. Bowle, in his catalogue of poets who have treated Milton's subject before him, mentions Alcimus Avitus, archbishop of Vienna, who wrote a poem, in Latin hexameters, *De Origine*

° See the Preface to his Church Government, B. ii. and his Epitaph. Damon. v. 133, &c.

<sup>p</sup> See Jacobi Gaddii Adlocutiones, et Elogia &c. Florentiæ, 1636. 4to. p. 38.



*Mundi.* Phillips, in his <sup>9</sup> account of this author, adds the name of Claudius Marius Victor, a rhetorician of Marseilles, who wrote upon *Genesis* in hexameters also; which are said to be extant. Pantaleon Candidus, a German poet, has a copy of verses, I find, in his *Loci communes theologici*, &c. Basil. 1570. p. 24—27, entitled *Lapsus Adæ*; and in a nuptial hymn, in the same volume p. 110, he has painted the creation of Eve in lines not unworthy the attention of Milton.

“ Ergo, novum molitus opus, Pater ipse profundum

“ Instillat somnum, cui jam in tellure jacenti

“ Eximit insertam lato sub pectore costam,

“ Explens carne locum, sed enim pulcherrima visu

“ Fœmina, quæ donis superaret quicquid in orbe est,

“ Exoritur; qualis primo cùm Lucifer ortu

“ Evehit auricomum gemmatâ luce nitorem.

“ Nec mora surgenti è somnis, lucémque tuenti,

“ Matronam insignem Genitor vultúque decoram

“ Obtulit ante oculos Adæ: miratur honorem

“ Egregium, et toto fulgentem pectore formam;

“ Agnoscitque suo sumptum de corpore corpus.

“ Et sic incipiens læto tandem ore profatur:

“ Aspicio, accipiôque libens tua maxima rerum

“ Munera largitor, nostris ex ossibus ossa.

“ Formata in teneros humani corporis artus

“ Offers, egregiâque thori me compare donas, &c.”

I must not omit to mention an English poem, relating to the state of innocence, entitled “ *The Glasse of Time in the two first Ages*, divinely handled by Thomas Peyton, of Lincolne’s Inne, Gent.” 4to. Lond. 1623; and to observe also

<sup>9</sup> Theat. Poet. edit. 1675. Ancient Poets, p. 12.



that *Part of Du Bartas* had been translated into verse, and published, before the first edition of Sylvester's, "by William Lisle of Wilburgham, Esquier for the King's body," namely, in 1596 and 1598, and again in 1625. See the Note on Milton's cxivth. *Psalm*, ver. 11. Lisle's compound epithets, in his translation, are very numerous, and sometimes extremely beautiful. Sylvester has often merit also of this kind: but it is my duty to observe, that Sylvester is not always original: his shining phrases may be frequently traced in contemporary or preceding poets. In the Notes on Milton's poetical works, I have sometimes had occasion to exhibit the expressions of Sylvester in this point of view. In justice, however, to this laborious writer, I shall here close my remarks with a detached specimen of his poetry; to which, if Milton has been indebted, the temptation of the Serpent in *Paradise Lost* affords such a contrast, that the reader will be at no loss how to appreciate the improvement.

" Eve, second honour of this vniverse !

" Is't true (I pray) that jealous God, perverse,

" Forbids (quoth he) both you, and all your race,

" All the fair fruits these siluer brooks embrace ;

" So oft bequeath'd you, and by you possesse,

" And day and night by your own labour drest ?

" With th' air of these sweet words, the wily Snake

" A poysoned air inspired (as it spake)

" In Eve's frail brest ; who thus replies : O ! knowe,



- “ Whate’er thou be, (but thy kind care doth shewe  
 “ A gentle friend,) that all the fruits and flowrs  
 “ In this earth’s-heav’n are in our hands and powrs,  
 “ Except alone that goodly fruit diuine,  
 “ Which in the midst of this green ground doth shine;  
 “ But all-good God (alas! I wot not why)  
 “ Forbad us touch that tree, on pain to dy.—  
 “ She ceast; already brooding in her heart  
 “ A curious wish, that will her weal subvert.  
 “ As a false loue, that thick snares hath laid  
 “ T’ intrap the honour of a fair young maid,  
 “ When she (though little) listning ear affords  
 “ To his sweet, courting, deep-affected words,  
 “ Feels some affwaging of his freezing flame,  
 “ And sooths himself with hope to gain his game;  
 “ And, rapt with joy, vpon this point persists,  
 “ That parleing city never long resists:  
 “ Even so the Serpent, that doth counterfet  
 “ A guilefull call t’ allure vs to his net,  
 “ Perceiuing Eve his flattering gloze digest,  
 “ He prosecutes; and, jocund, doth not rest,  
 “ Till he haue try’d foot, hand, and head, and all,  
 “ Vpon the breach of this new-battered wall.  
 “ No, Fair, (quoth he) beleue not that the care  
 “ God hath, mankinde from spoyling death to spare,  
 “ Makes him forbid you (on so strict condition)  
 “ This purest, fairest, rarest fruit’s fruition:  
 “ A double fear, an envie, and a hate,  
 “ His iealous heart for euer cruciate;  
 “ Sith the suspected vertue of this tree  
 “ Shall soon disperse the cloud of idiocy,  
 “ Which dims your eyes; and, further, make you seem  
 “ (Excelling vs) even equall Gods to him.  
 “ O World’s rare glory! reach thy happy hand,  
 “ Reach, reach, I say; why dost thou stop or stand?  
 “ Begin thy blifs, and do not fear the threat  
 “ Of an vncertain God-head, onely great



“ Though self-aw’d zeal : Put on the glistering pall  
 “ Of immortality : Do not forestall  
 “ (As envious stepdame) thy posteritie  
 “ The soverain honour of Divinitie.”

Sylvester’s *Du Bartas*, edit. 1621. pp. 192, 193.

As Milton has been supposed to have been much obliged to other *poets* in describing the unsubdued spirit of Satan, especially where he says,

“ Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven ;”

I am tempted to make an extract or two from Stafford’s *Niobe*, a *prose*-work already<sup>r</sup> mentioned, in which Satan speaks the following words ; not dissimilar to passages in Fletcher and Crashaw, which have been cited, on the same subject.

“ They say, forsooth, that pride was the cause of my fall ; and that I dwell where there is nothing but weeping, howling, and gnashing of teeth ; of which that falsehood was the authour, I will make you plainelie perceiue. True it is, Sir, that I (*storming at the name of supremacie*) *sought to depose my Creatour* ; which the watchful, all-seeing eye of Prouidence finding, degraded me of my angelicall dignitie, dispossessed me of all pleasures ; and the Seraphin, and Cherubin, Throni, Dominationes, Virtutes, Potestates, Principatus, Arch-angeli, Angeli, and all the celestiall Hierarchie, (with a shout of applause,) *sung my departure out of heauen* : my Alleluia was turned into an Ehu ; and too soone I found, that I was corruptibilis ab alio, though not in alio ; and that he, that gaue me my being, could againe take it from mee. *Now, for as much as I was once an Angell of light, it was the will of Wisedome to confine me to darknes, and to create me Prince thereof : that so I,*

<sup>r</sup> See the Note §, p. 290.



WHO COULD NOT OBEY IN HEAVEN, MIGHT COMMAUND IN HELL. And, believe mee, Sir, *I had rather controule within my dark dioceſe, than to reinhabite cælum empyrium, and there liue in ſubjection, vnder check.*" Edit. 1611, pp. 16—18, part the ſecond. Stafford calls Satan the "grim-viſag'd Goblin," *ibid.* p. 85. And, in the firſt part of the book, he deſcribes the devil as having "*committed inceſt with his daughter, the World.*" p. 3. He alſo attributes the Gunpowder-plot to the devil, "with his unhalloved *ſenate of popes*, the inuentors and fauours of this vnheard-of attempt in hell." p. 149.

I have thus brought together opinions, delivered at different periods, reſpecting the *Origin of Paradise Loſt*; and have humbly endeavoured to trace, in part, the reading of the great poet, ſubſervient to his *plan*. More ſucceſſful diſcoveries will probably ariſe from the purſuits of thoſe, who are devoted to patient and liberal investigation. "s Videlicet hoc illud eſt præcipuè ſtudiorum genus, quod vigiliis augeſcat; ut cui ſubinde ceu fluminibus ex decurſu, ſic accedit ex lectione minutatim quo fiat uberior." To ſuch perſons may be recommended the maſterly obſervations of him, who was once ſo far impoſed upon as to believe Lauder an honeſt man, and Milton a plagiarist; but who expreſſed, when "t *Douglas and Truth* ap-

s Politian. *Miſcellaneorum Præf.*

t The Progreſs of Envy, an excellent poem occaſioned by Lauder's attack on the character of Milton. See Lloyd's *Poems*, 1762, p. 221.



peared," the "strongest indignation against the envious impostor: for they are observations resulting from a wish not to depreciate, but zealously to praise, the *Paradise Lost*. " \* Among the *inquiries*, to which this ardour of criticism has naturally given occasion, none is more obscure in itself, or more worthy of rational curiosity, than a retrospect of the progress of this mighty genius *in the construction of his work*; a view of the fabrick gradually rising, perhaps, from small beginnings, till its foundation rests in the center, and its turrets sparkle in the skies; to trace back the structure, through all its varieties, to the simplicity of its first plan; to find what was first projected, whence the scheme was taken, how it was improved, by what assistance it was executed, and from what stores the materials were collected; whether its founder dug them from the quarries of Nature, or demolished other buildings to embellish his own." I may venture to add that, in such inquiries, patience will be invigorated rather than dispirited; and every new discovery will teach us more and more to admire the genius, the erudition, and the memory of the inimitable Milton.

" So bishop Douglas told the affectionate biographer of Dr. Johnson. See Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. i. p. 197, edit. 1799.

\* See Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. i. p. 199.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.





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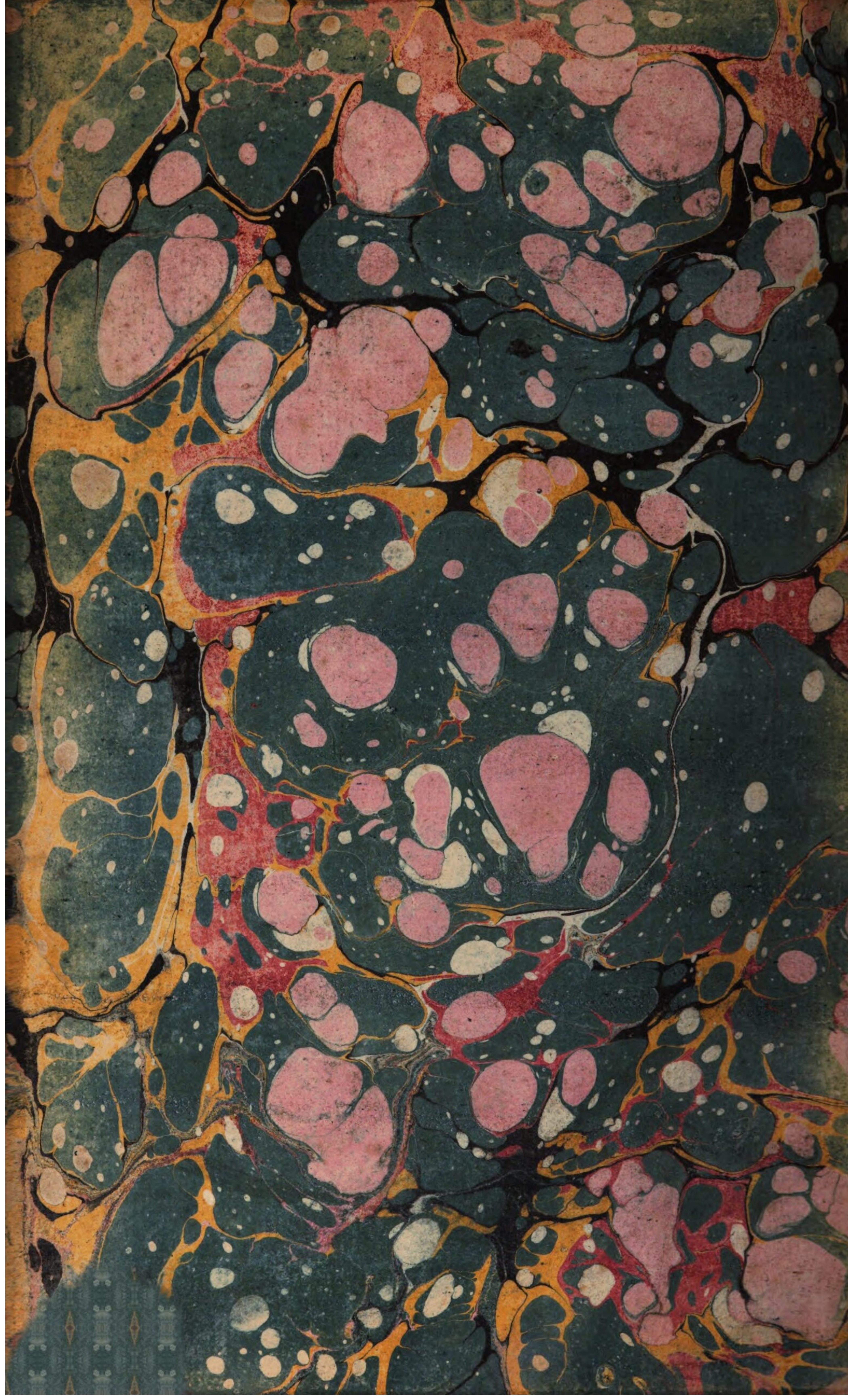








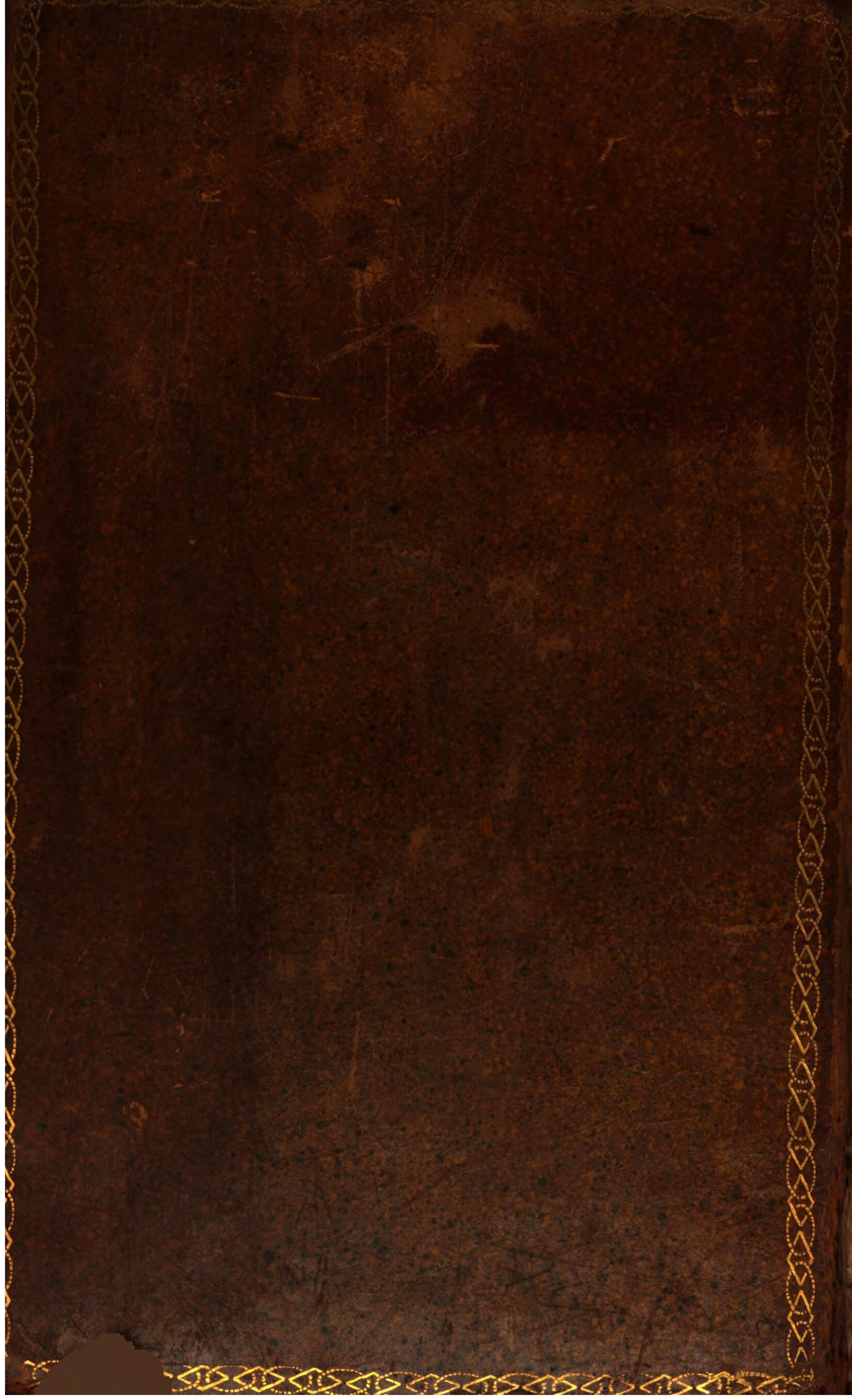














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